frustrated.
The German winter offensive has been ~~defeated~~

After fourteen days of bitter fighting the great enemy attempt to break through and destroy the entire northern portion of the Allied front in western Europe has failed.

As it stands now we have fought the enemy to a standstill - and more than that, on the southern flank of his salient he is being pushed back, losing valuable ground and more men and precious equipment. In bright sunshine this afternoon our airforce was over the battle area again striking more heavyx blows.

If von Runditstedt wants to save the two Panzer armies in the salient he must retreat. But that does not mean he will retreat. This German winter offensive had a political as well as a military purpose. Its success was to bolster the morale of the German people and the German army. And itm may be thatHitler may order von Rundtstedt to attack again in a last desperate effort to get the front in motion again. If that happens this German failure may well turn into disaster.

If the Germans attack again -- and, mind you they still have enough strength to launch another largescale attack - they will do so under much more unfavorable conditions than they had when they began the offensive two weeks ago. We have destroyed thousands of their vehicles, and more than fourhundred of their tanks. We have killed, wounded and captured thousands of men. ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ In these last two weeks they have used large quantities of supplies, and seen our bombers turn their gas and ammunition and food dumps into flaming wrecks. And the supplies they've captured from us haven't made much difference. Their most precious booty - gasoline - was not captured in sufficient quantity to run a Panzer Army for a day. ------ In addition to this our fighter bombers and medium bomber have been pounding their roads and their

bridges. I saw a new air photograph of the key German road junction of St. Vith this afternoon. It looks like one of those pictures we used to see of the flying bomb sites on the channel coast -- nothing but craters. --- But with these material disadvantages the Germans have a much greater moral one. Two weeks ago, when they first attacked they caught us by surprise at a thinly held point of the front. If they attack now they will not catch us by surprise anywhere, and our front is anything now but thinly held.

That is the situation as it prevails now. The one thing we feel sure the Germans will not do is just sit and hold the positions they have now., They've got to move in one direction or another. And, for the first time in two weeks, it is our strength that has put them in a strategic dilemma. --- The buildup of forces that's been accomplished in the last two weeks by our high command has been phenomenal, and we hope it won't be long before we can tell more of that story. The courage and skill shown by our troops - the new divisions as well as the veterans is absolutely above praise.

But let's be cautious about assessing the picture. I said the German offensive had been frustrated, and that it had failed -- because it has not destroyed our front, the great wheeling movement of the two Panzer armies to the north has been stopped dead. But the German winter offensive is not yet completely defeated. If the enemy withdraws the more than twenty divisions he now has in the salient he has a good striking force which he can move to another point in the line and perhaps try again.

He can still extricate those divisions and use them to defend western Germany. If he does that he will still have won a secondary success over these last two weeks. He has in-

flicted painful losses on us -- we have lost tens of thousands of men ~~in~~ as prisoners, killed and wounded, we have lost tousands of vehicles. And the German blow has delayed the progress of our own winter offensive ~~for~~ by many weeks.

There will still be bloody fighting ahead. Even if he retreats the enemy will attack - attack to keep us pinned down. And after that - well, no one can say.

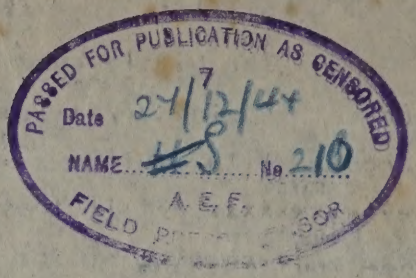
~~But~~ We can draw immense satisfaction that, in two weeks, starting from absolute scratch, we have foiled the daring and skilful plan of the strongest striking force the Germans have ever assembled. But that satisfaction should not be a signal to relax. The army here in the field isn't doing it, and it's more ~~than~~ important than ever that you at home work with redoubled energy.

This is Richard C. Hottelet broadcasting for the last time from the First US Army front and returning you now to CBS in New York.

CBS Hottelet 234730 27 December 44

The battle east of the Meuse River has just about reached the point of temporary stalemate -- that is, temporary balance of forces;. It's obvious that the Germans haven't gotten as far as they must get if they want a major victory;. They're still East of the Meuse - they've not occupied any strategic terrain, and despite our losses we have built up enormous strength in the threatened area;. The enemy finds himself in a narrow corridor -- only about thirty miles wide; He can't push out to the north because we're too strongly built up. On the south we're already counterattacking and threatening his flank - seriously threatening his flank; today we succeeded in breaking through to a force that had for days been fighting behind the enemy lines, holding the major road junction of Bastogne; -- And in the western end of the German salient -- well, the enemy is insecure there just because the salient itself is so narrow; ----- That's the enemy picture, roughly; - he's in a much better spot, he keeps attacking, and he's still got a lot of strength left to throw at us. ~~And he'll stay aggressive, keep trying to fan out, because he must either advance or retreat; He hasn't got the strength to just keep standing where he is, and there's no particular military purpose to be served by doing that; He'll attack as long as he can.~~

I had a long talk with a German officer last night - ~~a young SS officer, tough as they come? He didn't know very much about the high strategy of the German offensive, but he did know the vague outlines;~~ Von Rundstedt's plan was to break into our lines, two armies abreast - the ~~Fifth and Sixth~~ Two Panzer Armies. The attack was to be carried forward in waves. He was in the second wave that didn't start moving until the 22nd of December. The first wave got its objectives as planned, maybe even a bit a-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head of schedule, and then the second wave of divisions came in. That was five days ago, and the progress they've made has been negligible. ~~They've gotten armored spearheads pretty far west on reconnaissance~~, but they haven't developed the situation enough to warrant the Germans shifting their center of gravity farther westward; This SS officer ~~said~~ admitted that ~~they were~~ surprised by the fierce resistance they met on a flank they expected would be soft. And then we've had good luck with the wewther so that the German losses from our artillery fire and infantry have been added to materially ~~by our bombing; --- But mainly I think it's very true to say that~~ our soldiers have fought the enemy to a temporary standstill.

I wish I could tell you more about the cases of almost fantastic bravery -- of the units that have fought behind the enemy lines, green troops and veterans, until they were lost or relieved-- of task forces which fought till their ammunition ran out and then destroyed their tanks and vehicles and escaped man by man - of other task forces who fought their way back. The reason we can't say more about ~~these~~ how we stopped the enemy is because we're not altogether sure the enemy is ~~definitively~~ stopped, for good.

It's a temptation to say that the tide has turned, and that it's flowing in our favor now. But it's not as clear as that. We haven't reached the point yet where we've wrested the initiative from the Germans. As far as I'm concerned I'm going to follow very closely the events of the next three or four days. They might be decisive.

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I wish I could tell you more about the cases of almost fantastic bravery -- of the units that have fought behind the enemy lines, green troops and veterans, until they were lost or relieved -- of task forces which fought till their ammunition ran out and then destroyed their tanks and vehicles and escaped man by man - of other task forces who fought their way back. The reason we can't say more about xxxxx how we stopped the enemy is because we're not altogether sure the enemy is xxxxxxxxxx stopped, for good.

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The enemy has been held in the northern part of his corridor, and we're pushing in on him from the south. But he's still fighting an offensive, mainly probing out to the west -- sending out armored reconnaissance columns and attacking to the north to find a way to turn our flank.

It's out there in the west that the situation has been fluid all along -- only just beginning to stabilize. There, east of the Meuse River, very OFTEN no one has known where the enemy OR OUR OWN units were. Our men have driven peacefully down a road and run into a battle right around the corner. And men in the rear echelons, the clerks and cooks and military police who do a division's housekeeping, have suddenly found themselves in the front line. In some cases men like these have been our main defense against a German Panzer spearhead -- and they've stood and fought and held. ----- The other day in a broadcast I said that when the Germans broke through our actual battle line, they no longer found any combat troops, but only the soldiers of the rear echelons. Well -- I want to tell you the story now of some of these men who became combat troops by surprise and won their battle.

Only a few days ago one of our famous armored divisions was feeling its way into the path of the German push to the west. That meant it sent tank columns down roads, and reconnaissance cars, and sent infantry poking around in the woods to find out where the enemy was. Miles back behind it, in a little village, it left its rear command post. There were a headquarters company, some MP's, mechanics, cooks and bakers. Germans were miles away -- or so they thought until at half past seven this particular morning they began getting heavy German mortar fire. Now a mortar can only fire a few thousand yards, so it was plain the enemy was close. And a short time later two German tanks with some Panzer Grenadiers in support came up the road toward the village. I asked Captain William Rodman of Philadelphia, who commands the headquarters company how he felt when the attack began. He

wasn't fazed at all. He said - Right away we formed a little task force of our own. We had four tanks that had broken down with motor trouble on the way down and were just catching up with the division. Then we had part of a signal company and part of a mortar section that'd been left bhnd All in all we had ninety men.

Well, these ninety men set out to hold that village. The first two German tanks nosed into the main street and a couple of cooks leaned out of a window with bazookas and knocked them out. One of these tanks burst into flame, and the GI's watched with surprise as someone in American uniform got out and started to run. They shot him dead. He was a German with forged American papers. He also had an automatic pistol and a card claiming that he was entitled to treatment as a noncombatant under the Geneva convention.

After these tanks were knocked out the Germans withdrew and in the lull that followed our men organized their defense. Luckily, since it was a division rear command post, there were a lot of telephone extensions around and their communications were good. So Lieutenant Clarence MacDonnell, of NEW YORK crawled into an attic and began to function as forward mortar observer. -- This in a rear CP, supposedly miles behind the line. All the next day he fired his mortars, and when the enemy filtered into town behind him they didn't find his attic and they didn't find his telephone wire, so he kept calling in mortar fire. By the time the attack was over his score was three tanks - Panthers and Mark Fours - knocked out.

Well, the second night the Germans really made an effort to take that village. It had an important bridge and an important crossroads and they wanted it. They attacked with a battalion of infantry and another eight tanks. Things didn't look too good for us. We HELD the west side of main street BUT CAME IN AND TOOK THE EAST SIDE. the enemy the east. But those STILL OUR ninety men DIDN'T BUDGE. And in the middle of the attack a couple of the TOUGH MP's had time to find some condensed milk and some K ration to feed an eight month old baby girl in one of the cellars. --- Seven of the eight remaining German tanks were knocked out. Some by mortars, some

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by bazookas, one by a forty millimeter bofors gun that just kept hammering on one of the enemy tanks until its crew got out and ran for it, and the cooks and the MP's and the rest of the boys beat off the German battalion. And I mean it when I say that this German outfit -- one of von Rundstedt's spearheads - was a really tough bunch. We kept the town, we kept the bridge. AND OUR CASUALTIES WERE ONLY A FEW MEN WOUNDED. All that time the fighting was confused. Not only were the Germans alwazys in the next house -- but some of them were in American uniform and one of their tanks was an American Sherman tank. --p But it's the end of a battle that counts and the end of this battle was in our favor.

Yesterday these men were relieved, and I saw them last night celebrating Christmas one day late with a tree and with a guitar accordion duet. They were really proud. The men of the division had raised them to the dignity of a combat command and called them CCM - Cooks, Clerks and Mechanics!

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CBS Hottelet 1800 27 December 1944

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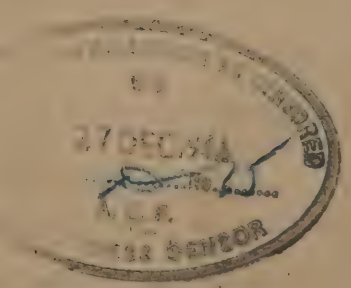
The Germans attacked during the night again. We beat them off to keep their winter offensive rolling. It's interesting to see the way the enemy has been launching these attacks - how he's shifted the weight of his strength and the direction of his attack. Mainly he's been pushing against our northern flank. For several days he kept attacking the shoulder south of Monschau, trying to widen the area of his penetration - trying to crumble our line. By day and by night he attacked there, with tanks and infantry - probing forward trying to pry holes into our wall. It took him a couple of days to realize that he wasn't having much success, that he was losing too much and not gaining ground. So he shifted the weight of attack westward, and built up forces in the Malmedy and Stavelot area for another push. --- We went to work on that one with artillery and with our fighter bombers. It cost the Germans pretty heavily, and they decided they'd look around for a weaker place to push -- because push they've got to. The only other alternatives are to retreat - which they'll do only when they're sure they're beaten; or to stay and fight it out -- for which they haven't got the resources to match us punch for punch. ---- So - they moved attacking forces still farther west and tried to attack northward again last night. -- I spent the night up in that particular area. It was a good night for us -- absolutely clear with a brilliant moon. In the icy cold German tanks and infantry began to move forward and in the frozen sky above German bombers came in to support the attack. -- And all around us the night was filled with thunder, but it was the thunder of our heavy guns plastering the enemy columns and concentration area. Except for a few vehicles the enemy force - and it was a strong force - never got close enough to us really to attack.

The picture of the front is essentially the same this morning -- our flank holding firm on the north, barring the Germans' way to Liege. And our flank on the south pressing in on the enemy, narrowing his area down, facing him with the first threat of being cut off. The most dramatic development has been the relief of the force we



had ~~holding their corners~~ fighting far behind the enemy's lines, defending the area of the important road center of Bastogne. For days now we've been supplying these troops by air, and now we've broken through to them. ~~We'll have to wait before we can give you any details on this operation.~~ But already it's presenting the enemy with a new problem -- forcing him to look around quickly on his left and worry about still another thing that's hindering his offensive.

It's only out on the western end of ~~the corridor~~ the German penetration that the situation is not quite so stabile. But as every day passes we're turning this corridor more and more into a blind alley. Already we've noticed that the Germans, who've got long/thin armored spearheads stretched out to the west way ahead of their main body -- that the Germans have been more reluctant to send their heavy stuff too far to the west. It's almost as if they thought the ice were getting thinner the deeper they pushed on. Which is probably right. --- But the enemy is still strong and still aggressive.

We're finding more and more of his vehicles out on the fringes of the German push that had run out of gas and had to be abandoned. And German prisoners we've taken in the westernmost sector have told us of food shortage.

This is just the beginning for the enemy. His real difficulties are still to come, but he's still strong and still aggressive.

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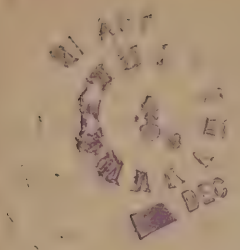

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CBS Hottelet 1300 25 December 1944

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day have brought not even a temporary lull to this bloody front. It seems absurd even to think of Christmas - and when here and there men wish each other a Merry Christmas it sounds flat and miserable and completely out of place. --- Because the Germans are continuing to attack, and, with their southern sprhead, continuing to advance along our lines - everywhere, where the front is stabilized for the time being and where it's still fluid -- it's a time of incessant watchfulness and preparation. It's icy cold but all night and all day the men at the gun positions, in the forward observation posts, the men of the infantry and the tanks have been alert no one can tell when the enemy will throw all his strength into another great effort to set the entire front moving again.

On this Christmas day the Battle in Western Belgium is building up to a climax. More strength is flowing into the battle area. Both sid es now have thousands of tanks and well over a million men already committed or waiting to go into the battle. The stage is set for one of the greatest struggles of this war on any front. It is the Battle for the Rhine and the Battle for the Ruhr - it is the enemy's last big hope. For him everything is at stake.

By day and by night there's fighting on the ground and in the air that ten d ays ago would have seemed remarkable. Now it's routine. Last night German bombers were over the front again, and the thunder of bombs and the barking and flashing of the guns made it a proper Christmas Eve. The last time I broadcast from up forward I had to break off in the middle because German planes were divebombing near by. --- But yesterday was a field day for our air power. We had literally thousands of bombers and more than a thousand fighters in the sky over the battle area. ---

INSERT Their armored columns are still rolling ahead in places - followed up with swift motorized infantry.

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There is no huge battle in progress at the moment, that is-by the standards set up during the first week- of the German winter offensive. But there are engagements -- attacks and counterattacks at various parts of the front by day and by night which would have rated headlines ten days ago. Now it's routine. Where there were company and battalion attacks then, division attacks have now become commonplace.

~~Last night German bombers were over the front~~

The losses on both sides in this battle have not been light - either in men or equipment. We are not giving ground any longer without a stiff battle -- and the Germans are resisting our counterattacks. We can't give any estimate of our losses, but various indications do come in that show the Germans are probably losing more than we. At one point on the front we have now wiped out a German spearhead that we surrounded some days ago. Apart from the German tanks I saw burned out on the road while we were fighting our way in, our troops captured 38 tanks, including nine Tigers, more than seventy personnel carriers and all kinds of guns. Hundreds of enemy dead were counted. ~~--- And our air strikes have been hard. We don't know exact results yet of yesterday's sensational air show -- but the sweeps by our tactical air commands have destroyed hundreds of German vehicles. And yesterday one of our patrols pushed into the German lines and found 34 burned out German tanks and several hundred unburied dead.~~

But the enemy is still coming. Last night German bombers were over the front again, and the thunder of bombs and the flashing, barking of the guns made it a proper Christmas eve.

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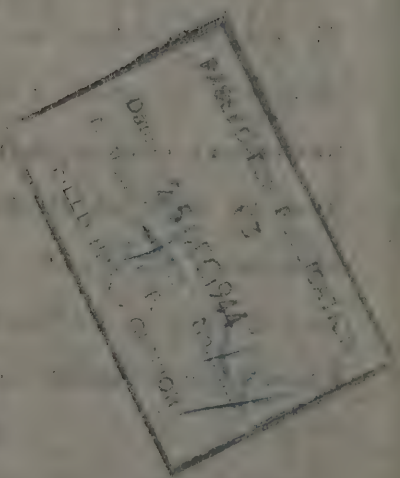

There was no MOOD FOR TIMES FOR cheer and no relaxation. The only Christmas carols heard up forward were ones played by the enemy and bellowed across our lines by loudspeaker to make our men homesick. First came Silent Night - and then a voice in broken English oozily talking of Christmas back home, Then Adeste Fidelis, and the voice again - this time urging our men to surrender and save their lives for future Christmases. --- This from an enemy who has been ordered in his present offensive to kill the prisoners he takes, It was obscene, and got the only answer it deserved --- bursts of machinegun fire from cursing GI's.

It's been icy cold on the front -- and the mud on the roads and in the fields has frozen hard in wrinkles and folds. And the tire marks of trucks and jeeps and the tanks that have been rolling forward are now hardened into regular corrugated patterns. --- The men digging new positions in the fields have had to chop at the ground with their shovels and use picks. There's no more sinking a spade into soft earth to scoop out a hole.

And over all, over green grass and brown roads, over naked trees and deep pines forests, over ruined buildings and corpses and the wrecks of tanks and trucks -- over everything this late december chill has thrown a patina of frost. Out in forward positions men are lying in holes, beating their hands together, stamping their feet to get warm. And the ones who are in houses and cellars with stoves and something to burn know how lucky they are. Last night was clear - and there was a bright moon, nearly full, lighting the earth with its cold silver radiance.

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CBS Hottelet 224730 23 December 1944

It's icy cold on the front tonight, and the mud on the roads and in the fields has frozen hard in wrinkles and folds. And the tire marked of trucks and jeeps and tanks that have been rolling forward are now hardened into regular corrugated patterns. The men digging new positions in the fields have had to chop at the ground with their shovels and use axes. There's no more sinking a spade into soft earth to scoop out a hole. -- And over all -- over green grass and brown roads, over naked trees and deep pine forests, over ruined buildings and corpses and the wrecks of tanks and trucks - over everything this late december chill has thrown a patina of frost. There was a bright half moon earlier this evening, adding it's cold silver radiance through a thin mist but now it's midnight and it's dark.

Out in forward positions men are lying in holes, beating their hands together, stamping their feet to get warm. And the ones who are in houses and cellars with stoves and something to burn know how lucky they are. Here and there you'll hear artillery fire, or the nervous chatter of German burp guns or our tommy guns as patrols stab out across the line to pry for weak points, or spot changes. Colored flares shoot up here and there - orange, red, green - to confuse the night.

Only in a few places, where the Germans are still pressing forward into areas we have not yet consolidated, is it plain that the enemy winter offensive is in progress. Here German reconnaissance armored cars, motorcycles, bicycle troops are probing ahead. And the Luftwaffe has been active again. (I had to break off a broadcast this afternoon because German planes were dive-bombing [our transmitter])--- But in general, after a week of fighting and turmoil, and gradual consolidation, things have settled down

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pretty much. --- It's mainly behind the lines that you realize we're building up for one of the greatest battles to be fought on any front in this war. Both sides are pouring reinforcements into the area. The chances are that there are already about a million men in the battle zone -- and an unprecedented concentration, by both sides, of armored power. --All this in the zone of a penetration that's about thirty miles wide and slightly more than thirty miles deep.

The men on our front are completely alert, guns are at the ready with shells half rammed into their breeches. They're waiting for the German attack - the next big attack - which we know will come.

And back, deep in our rear areas, our men are also on the alert. Every road is blocked and guarded, vehicles are halted. Because the Germans have sent a lot of agents ~~in American uniforms~~ into our lines ~~by jeep and parachute~~. And when you're stopped, as we were a number of times on the way to this transmitter, the guards aren't satisfied that your papers are in order. They ask you for the opening lines of Lincoln's Gettysburg address, or who won the world series, or what happened to Li'l Abner on Sadie Hawkins day. --- And there's more than one Nazi spy who's in a military prison right now, ~~awaiting execution~~, because he didn't know who Frank Sinatra is.

This is Richard C. Hottelet with the American First Army returning you now to ~~General~~ Electric in New York.

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CBS Hottelet 1400 25 December 1944

This is a miserable Christmas for the men of the First Army -- a day, not of peace or even rest, but a day of blood and battle in an icy December cold. It's a day of attack and counterattack, made more bitter by the fact that the Germans are still pushing and that we have not been able to keep them from driving their southern spearhead farther to the west.

And all through the icy cold night of Christmas eve there was fighting, too, and incessant watchfulness and preparation. There was the thunder of guns breaking up local German attacks, and the bark of antiaircraft guns as German fighter bombers raced over all night. There was the rumble of tanks and trucks up to the front, as both sides brought up more supplies and reinforcements. This Battle in western Belgium is building up to a climax. Already there are more than a million men on both sides, either in the battle or waiting to be committed. And there are literally thousands of tanks. We're building up for one of the greatest battles of this war on any front.

The Germans are putting in everything they have - IN THE AIR AS WELL AS ON THE GROUND. and you can see that the way they're fighting in the air. The last time I broadcast from up forward I had to sit off because the Germans were dive bombing near by. And when they come out at night they not only drop bombs but more parachutists to create confusion behind our lines. But, though THEY'VE the Germans have put as many as a thousand planes up against us in the last couple of days -- we've seen here the really shattering force of Allied air power. Yesterday we SAW THE SPINE TINGLING SPECTACLE OF had thousands of bombers and fighters over the battle area.

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CBS Hottelet 1931 24 December 1944

Our air power had its first chance today to get into the battle of the German breakthrough - and it struck terrific blows at the enemy. For hours around noon the dominant sound above the battlefield and behind the German lines was the roaring of our planes - and the thunder of their exploding bombs. We had literally thousands of planes in the sky. There were RAF heavy bombers coming over, [redacted], singly -- and there were huge fleets of fortresses and liberators. There were medium bombers and fighter bombers. And above, below, around all of them were swarms of our fighters - darting around, looking for German planes and in the substratosphere and coming down to machinegun German targets on the ground.

Targets WERE for all of them were supply dumps and supply columns, spearheads, [redacted] headquarters, airfields -- all the rear installations that the Germans need to sustain their thrust to the west. And our bombers pinpointed forward targets, gunpositions, tank and infantry columns. IT WAS a beautiful day for air - from every point of view. Clear skies, sunshine and good visibility gave our fliers the chance to strike -- and they struck. High in the sky you could see the stately, measured con-trails of our formations, and the curving, feathering trails of our fighters. You might almost have thought they were skywriting -- but high in the air there were some bitter dogfights with German interceptors. This great air attack of ours was a dangerous threat to the enemy. If his supplies are destroyed and his lines cut he cannot continue his attack -- and unless he can keep on attacking and advancing his winter offensive is doomed. -- So the Germans

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put up what may be their maximum effort. All along our ~~xxxx~~ bombers points of entry they were jumped by enemy fighters. Our own fighter ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ screamed into battle, and on the ground below soldiers and civilians almost ~~xxx~~ forgot the fighting around them for a time to stand and gape at the spectacle in the sky. ~~And on both sides of the front antiaircraft batteries were the busiest men of the day, because German fighter bombers came bombing and strafing behind our lines. Yesterday and today~~ German have seen a major ~~xxx~~ effort in the air -- giving us the ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ chance to hit their Luftwaffe as hard as their tanks and troops on the ground.

This battle in western Belgium is building up to a climax. The intensity of battle has slackened somewhat but the enemy is still attacking, and still advancing with his southern spearhead. More strength is flowing into the battle area -- ~~and there are about a million men there already~~ already, on both ~~xx~~ sides, setting the stage for one of the greatest battles of this war on any front. ~~The Germans will make another effort to break through again -- a mighty effort.~~

~~We're preparing to meet him. And right now, on~~ this grim Christmas Eve ~~xx~~ there's not a man ~~xxxx~~ who doesn't want just one present -- ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the best present we could possibly have ~~---~~ another day or two of good weather for our bomber fleets to come over again.

there's no time

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~~[illegible]~~ Germans will make another effort to ~~[illegible]~~ --
a mighty effort.

~~[illegible]~~ grim Christmas Even there's not a man ~~xxxx~~ who doesn't want just one
present -- ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the best present we could possibly
have ---- weather day or two of good weather for our bomber fleets to
come over again.

24 DEC 1944

3072

TODAY On this grim Christmas there's not a man ~~xxxx~~ who doesn't want just one present -- the best present we could possibly have --- another day or two of good weather for our bomber fleets to come over again.

And it looks as if today could be another big day -- the sky is hazy, but a bright sun is beginning to ~~x~~ sweep it away.

You can have your Santa Claus. Give us a division of B 17's.

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12/23/44
Battle of The Bulge

CBS Hottelet 224730 25 December 1944

It's icy cold on the front tonight, and the mud on the roads and in the fields has froz n hard in vrinkles and folds. xx And the tire marked of trucks and jeeps and tanks that have been rolling forward are now hardened into regular corrugated patterns. The men digging new positions in the fields have had to chop at the ground with their shovels and use axes. There's no more sinking a spade into soft earth to scoop out a hole. -- And over all --- over green grass and brown roads, over naked trees and deep pine forests, over ruined buildings and corpses and the wrecks of tanks and trucks - over everything this late december chill has thrown a patina of frost. There was a bright half moon adding it's cold silver radiance through a thin mist earlier this evening, but now it's midnight and it's xxx dark.

Out in forward positions men are lying in holes, beating their hands together, stamping their feet to get warm. And the ones who are in houses and cellars with xxxxx stoves and something to burn know how lucky they are. Here and there you'll hear German artillery fire, or the nervous chatter of burp guns or our tommy guns as patrols stab out x across the line to pry for weak points, or spot changes. Colored flares shoot up here and there - orange, red, green - to confuse the night.

Only in xxxx places, where the Germans are still pressing forward into areas we have not yet consolidated, is it plain that the enemy winter offensive is in progress. Here German reconnaissance xxxxx points armored -/cars, motorcycles, bicycle troops are probing ahead. And the Luftwaffe has been active again. (I had to break off a broadcast this afternoon because German planes were dive-bombing (our transmitter, Heard) ---- But in general, after a week of fighting and turmoil, and gradual consolidation, things have settled down

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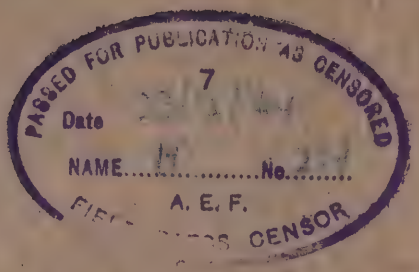
pretty much. --- It's mainly behind the lines that you realize we're building up for one of the greatest battles to be fought on any front in this war. Both sides are pouring reinforcements into the area. The chances are that there are already about a million men in the battle zone -- and an unprecedented concentration, by both sides, of armored power. --All this in the zone of a penetration that's about thirty miles wide and slightly more than thirty miles deep.

The men on our front are completely alert, guns are at the ready with shells half rammed into their breeches. They're waiting for the German attack - the next big attack - which we know will come.

And back, deep into our rear areas, our men are also on the alert. Every road is blocked and guarded. Because the Germans have sent a lot of agents in American uniforms into our lines ~~by jeep and parachute.~~ And, when you're stopped, as we were a number of times on the way to this transmitter, the guards aren't satisfied that your papers are in order. They ask you for the opening lines of Lincoln's Gettysburg address, or who won the world series, or what happened to Li'l Abner on Sadie Hawkins day. --- And there's more than one Nazi spy who's in a military prison right now, ~~awaiting execution~~, because he didn't know who Frank Sinatra is.

This is Richard C. Hottelet with the American First Army returning you now to General Electric in New York.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AEF XII CORPS 23 DEC 1944

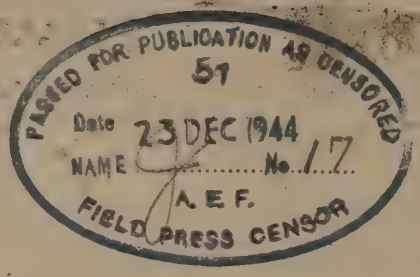
CBS Hottelet 1300 23 December 1944

The Germans have continued to advance on the southern flank of their penetration. They have reached the area of St. Hubert, three which is thirty/miles west of the German border. To get there they crossed the northern part of Luxemburg altogether, and into Belgium. It is in that area that German tanks have broken into the important road center of Bastogne, and to the south of ~~that town~~ it they cut the main highway. -- ~~This is a blow to our lateral communications, and strengthens the German position down there.~~

AEF XII CORPS 23 DEC 1944

Up a bit to the north the German thrust has pushed in 27 miles from the German border, to the area of Lahoche.

Even with these additional advances, though, it's plain that the enemy isn't going as fast as he had been. But as you move north the news gets somewhat better. ~~on our northern flank the enemy succeeded only at one point in making an advance of about five hundred yards. Elsewhere along that flank, that runs almost~~ straight east west through Malmedy and Stavelot he's been held. ----And it's not that the front there has been quiet. The Germans have been building up in this entire area, bringing up fresh troops and more weapons. For days now he's been pushing in steadily, not in any great attack, but in strong local thrusts --trying to find a weak place in our new line, trying to crumble away part of our front, to pave the way for a bigger push. He put in tanks with his infantry at ~~two points~~ east of Malmedy, but they were thrown back. ---- It's in the nature of this winter offensive that the Germans must keep it going at all costs. They can't afford to match us punch for punch in a battle of supply and material. So, when we hold them up, the way we have held them up here in the north we know very well that they're not going to sit and wait. Their strategy is flexible enough not to be thrown off balance by one setback. It's a strategy of attack, of movement -- in one direction or another. And they'll try to follow it through.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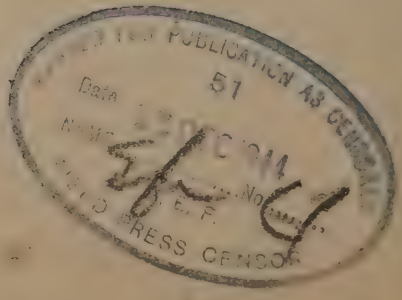
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A. E. F.
PRESS CENSOR

23 DEC 1944

Last night they came over again with strong air formations, dropping bombs, and flares, and more paratroopers behind our lines. This morning on the road we saw the familiar scene of jeep road patrols, their machineguns loaded and ready, looking for trouble. For the first time, also, the Germans tried to drop supplies to their units that are cut off in the pocket west of Stavelot. They weren't very successful. A number of the containers, --mainly containing antitank weapons -- fell behind our lines. And the surrounded force is getting smaller and smaller, as the enemy loses more tanks and men. -- I saw some prisoners of war this morning whom we'd fished out of the pocket. They said that they'd been ordered to hold out at all costs until another spearhead drove through from the east to relieve them. -- They weren't the same cocky SS men I'd seen in the first days of the offensive. Instead of sounding off about the terrific victories that were just around the corner, of the imminent capture of Liege and Aachen, these prisoners were wondering what had happened to the time table, why they weren't making progress.

Don't think the German threat is finished, even up here. There's still a lot of stuff to come in. But it's a tougher fight for the enemy every day. --

This morning, up at the front, I saw our forces move in on the German pocket. The air is icy cold, the ground has begun to freeze solid. The infantry plodded ahead, blowing white breath in front of them, punching their hands together. Along the side of the road were dead Germans and the wrecks of Panther tanks and the new ruins of Belgian houses and churches. There was a roar in the misty sky overhead, and through the frost covered trees, you could see squadrons of our Marauders headed out. It's the first time we've seen them for days. If the weather clears now and we get air support it'll really be good news.

CBS Hottelet 1400 23 December 1944

This morning the front of the German offensive is still fluid in its southern half, and pretty well stabilized in the north, at least for the time being. -- In the south German tanks have penetrated into the important road center of Bastogne, and cut themain highway leading down to Luxemburg city.

It's in this area that the Germans have made their deepest penetration. They've reached the area of St. Hubert here, which is ~~about forty~~ 38 miles from the ~~xxxxx~~ line they held when the offensive began.

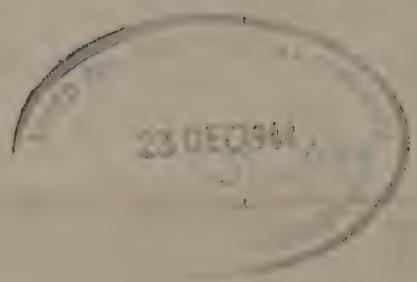
~~xxxxxxxxx~~ But up in the north, on their right flank, the Germans are certainly not having things their own way. I've just come back from the area west of Stavelot, ~~where a German spearhead has been cut off for the last three days.~~ Here, we are systematically hemming them in, and destroying them. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~

This has been a dramatic operation. It was here that the Germans were beginning to turn northwest ~~in the direction of Liege~~. If this column could have broken through it could have caused serious damage. There was nothing much we could do to stop it. Because when you're as far behind an army front as these people were you might almost be in upstate New York or in Arkansas. You don't see as many soldiers around as you might expect -- it's mostly quartermaster troops, and soldiers doing paper work in rear headquarters.

So we had to rush units up to contain this spearhead. They got there in time. ~~Some were veterans, but some were absolutely green.~~ I saw one tank battalion down at the front this morning, commanded by Lieutcol George Aubel of Phoenix Arizona ~~xxxx~~ went into action on this front for the first time, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

were holding they began to get vicious antitank fire. The first tank in the lead platoon was hit, and made useless for further firing, but the tank commander, Lietenant David Oblensky of Freehold, New Jersey, found that he could still maneuver. It was getting dark, further advance was too risky, so the lieutenant swung his tank around and blocked the road with it. The next morning they moved on again in support of infantry. Again fire from German antitank guns and Panther tanks threatened to stop them. Two more of their tanks were knocked out, but they kept going. Today I went down to their point - where the German spearhead has now been trapped and is being liquidated. On the road, as you go down, I saw four panther tanks and an armored German halftrack, burnt out and already rusting, some quadruple mount twenty millimeter guns and an 88 antitank gun. This battalion had lost three tanks and had not had a single man killed. ----- I asked the lieutenant if he knew that his bunch had been up against the flower of the German army. His answer was - they're plenty tough, but if you stand up and fight them you can beat them.

As he spoke, the rattle of machine guns came back - dulled in the morning mist. Our infantry and tanks were squeezing in this pocket. On they moved, over the crinkled, frozen mud of the road. The infantry plodded ahead, blowing their white breath out in front of them, punching their hands together, slapping their rifle butts. On the side of the road lay some German dead, a young blond SS captain, with frost covering his face and hair. The new ruins of Belgian houses and churches, and the old trees of the Ardennes had a thin white sprinkling of frost.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CBS Hottelet 1400 22 December 1944

The First Army front, from top to bottom, is more stabile this morning than it's been any time since the Germans began their winter offensive last saturday. There's still movement --but it's a much more balanced movement. On the southern portion of the front the Germans have taken a town we had been holding; and on the northern flank we are going ahead to liquidate a German spearhead column which we surrounded yesterday.

These past six days have been

I can tell you how much it means to have seen this strength of ours pour down into threatened areas. There have been misty cold along an empty road several/mornings this past week when I've come back/from sectors of the front that I knew were held only by patrols and cavalry screens -- and I've wondered what would happen if the Germans attacked there. And then, following a couple of jeeps would come a looming convoy of trucks and tank destroyers and tanks. And I'd lean out of my jeep and squint to get a look at the unit identification. Sometimes it was an outfit I knew well, sometimes it was a strange bunch from pretty far away, -- but I always felt better on the way home because I had seen our strength. And it was the same with the infantry. You know the army is big and powerful, but you're out by yourself in the dark or in under a miserable gray sky --and you want to see some tangible proof. -----Well, you see it here now. Again this morning I saw still another bunch thundering down from far away. And everyone, soldiers, civilians and war correspondents looked at it and smiled.

CBS Hottelet 1300 22 December 1944

The First Army front is still holding this morning, the enemy has pushed ahead at one point tothrow us out of the town. [illegible]r. But apart from that it looks as if he's building up/for a new attempt to get his winter offensive rolling again. And he needs reinforcements to start off again, because every day that's gone by has given us time to get more troops and fire power into the line, and every day has cost the enemy tanks and men and precious supplies.

Yesterday 55 enemy tanks were destroyed in the Bastogne area, and in the sector held by one of our infantry divisions on the northern flank of the German salient, 21 German tanks were knocked out - mainly the Panther Mark Fives and the smaller mark fours.

It was in this sector that two of our forward mortar observers did the German army some heavy damage yesterday. First Lieutenant Malcolm Wiltshire of South Orange New Jersey and Lieutenant Jay Parker of Gordon Nebraska got out into a forward observation post and spotted some traffic on a main German supply road. They called our mortars down on it, and hit some trucks; but German traffic didn't stop. Apparently this road was the only one they could use to supply their spearhead in the Stavelot sector. If the flow of supplies stopped the whole spearhead would die on the vine. So the German vehicles kept coming and our two lieutenants happily kept calling fire down on them, by this time not only mortar, but also artillery fire. The Germans tried coming down the road singly, they tried it in convoys -- they tried it at slow speed and at high. But our guns kept hitting them. --The score sheet of these two lieutenants at the end of the day was pretty good -- they had knocked out 14 trucks and damaged some more, they had definitely knocked out two tanks and probably got another. Of 8 halftracks they spotted they destroyed three, and got four probables. They also knocked out some antitank and antiaircraft guns and killed at least seventy infantrymen.

I've just come back from that part of the front. There was heavy snow during the night, and the lieutenants are sitting out in it, watching that road. And again today they were calling in the artillery.

Speaking of artillery I heard something out there that I haven't heard for some time -- an old fashioned artillery stonk, in which every gun within range comes down on a target at the same moment. That rumbling thunder was music. Because it showed that we had organized and coordinated our fire power again in this area. And that means a lot.

It's in that area too a bit farther west that we've cut off the tip of one German spearhead. We've got them surrounded and are pushing in on them - it's not a large force -- a company of tanks and a battalion of artillery -- and it's highly unlikely that any will get away.

These are all straws in the wind. They don't mean that the danger is past. But they do show you how, as day after day goes by and we get better organized and situated, we're building up a crust and bleeding the enemy. --- The Germans relied for surprise and swift, cunning, brutal movement to force a sudden dramatic decision in this winter offensive. They haven't got the supplies and staying power to sit here indefinitely and let this offensive become a war of attrition. They're going to have to lash out once again -- and that may be the climactic battle.

Xxxxx Columbia Broadcasting System New York 22 December 1944

PRESS PAUL WHITE COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEW YORK

Here your requested story rounding up available material German massacres:

The Germans are stopping at nothing to win success in their last desperate offensive. They have thrown in everything possible of their best equipment and their best remaining manpower. The best of their military experience has gone into it. And theyre determined no human considerations will stop or slow them down. They prepared go forward with utmost brutality.

German prisoners of war have revealed that General Kiese commander Twelfth SS Panzer Division quote Hitler Jugend unquote urged them xxx in pep message before attack not to let prisoners of war slow them down. He told them he not wanted any prisoners except perhaps a few officers for purposes of interrogation.

And indeed captured German evidence revealed most of units spearheading German drive behaved in this spirit. The third night of attack eye spent night one of our crack divisions. Late xxx in evening a German / prisoner was brought in dash a courier for a regiment of SS War Correspondents dash SS Kriegsberichterstandarte Kurt Eggers under which assigned provide propaganda ministry Berlin with movies xxxxxxx stills and stories of German advance. This courier been captured together with several reels of undeveloped film he was taking back entitled quote ve attack unquote dash wir greifen an unquote. As he sat on cot dimly lit room before being transported rear he told me how fanatical, almost hysterically enthusiastic troops were determined let nothing stand in their way. Since then his reels film developed by our military intelligence, A xxxx number of scenes show American dead one showed dead soldiers lying in straight rows as if they were lined up and shot. Another showed a heap of dead Americans around a road sign dash a most unlikely place for them to be killed in action; another showed a dead soldier with his shoes off. And it was rea

noticeable that most of the American dead that the Nazis had proudly photographed were lying there in just their uniforms - without any of their equipment. But usually a battle casualty will lie with his weapon around him and some of the equipment with which he was defending his position. It is usually only prisoners of war who are without rifles, steel helmets or anything.

But this, suspicious as it is, pales before the substantiated fact of the murder in cold blood of more than a hundred and twenty American prisoners of war. It was on the second day of the German offensive. The enemy had already broken through our thin forward defense line, and was fanning out in our practically empty rear area. Combat units were alerted to rush to the breakh, but in the meanwhile scattered outfits that were there were told to organize a defense as best they could. More than one column started out for another position and has not been heard of since, because there was no telling where the German armored spearheads were.

On the afternoon of Monday december seventeenth one column dash/trucks of an artillery observation battlion dash came up the road from St. Vith to Malmedy. It was on its way to take up position on a hill south of Malmedy. As they sped past a road intersection, with a few already beyond, there was a sharp crack, a detonation and one of the trucks burst into flame. There was another explosion, and another truck was hit. The men on the back trucks behind, with the road in front of them blocked, jumped off their vehicles. They had been ambushed by some German tanks - including a few Tigers. The tanks shot up more than two dozen vehicles, and then some Germanx infantry came to take

our men prisoner. Aesistance was useless. The Germans had about fifteen or twenty tanks, and our artillerymen were lightly armed.

Just under a hundred and fifty of our men were taken prisoner. The first thing the snarling young SS guards did was search them for cigarettes and wrist watches. Then they were herded over not far from a nearby farmhouse, where there were a handful of other American prisoners- some quartermaster troops and some medics. Here they were all lined up, six deep, with their hands clasped behind their heads. They stood that way for a full hour.

Hal Boyle of Associated Press brought back the first eye-witness story from one of these men dash techfive William Bee Summers of Glenville West Virginia. Summers said quote Eye thought something was wrong. And as we were standing there one German soldier moving past us on a tank pulled out a pistol and emptied it into our fellows stop and then dirty bastards opened up on us from tanks and armored cars with machineguns stop we hadnt tried to run away or anything stop we were just standing there with our hands up and they tried to murder us all unquote.

The machineguns were firing from a range of seventy five to a hundred feet. The men who were killed or wounded dropped in their tracks, and others who were not fell too, simulating death. And then the Germans came over to complete the massacre. Summers told Boyle quote Those German noncoms began walking around killing our wounded. Eye kept my head down, but after they had emptied their pistols eye could hear them click fresh cartridges in their hand while they reloaded. Then they went on looking for more fellows to shoot unquote.

Those left alive kept absolutely still in the mud and blood

as they lay in the mud amid the bloody bodies of their comrades, wishing that they themselves could stop breathing. They lay there for an hour. Then the Germans began to move off. As they moved some of the SS menriding on the tanks fired their pistols and carbines into the tumbled mass of bodies.

Finally there was only one Tiger tank left -- probably remaining behind to guard the road. The survivors of the massacre conferred in nervous whispers and decided to make a break for it Before other Germans came up. At a signal about twentyfive of them, ~~xxxxxx~~ one with his toes shot offone foot another with a bullet through his leg, got up and started to run for the shelter of some trees. As they ran the tank opened fire with its machinegun and about ten of the twentyfive were killed.

Nor is this the only instance of coldblooded murder committed by these SS troops. The same day, d cember seventeenth, a Belgian civilian with a machinegun bullet in his leg said that some young SS troops had machinegunned him and about forty other ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ civilians ~~in~~ near the little town of Trois Ponts, west of Stavelot in the Malmedy area. The civilians, including two women were machinegunned in a shack, which was then set on fire. The Belgian, who told his story to our military authorities, said he could give no reason for this action. ~~xxxx~~ enditem

Note white advise if desire more details or if you want me keep eye out for this type material regards

Richard Hottelet

AEF
21-DEC 1944

[illegible] Cable from CHARLES MACARTHUR, New York.

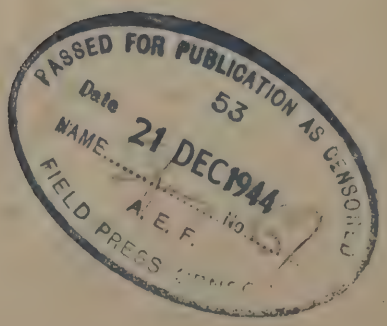
21 December 1944

20446

Herewith complete december [illegible]

We've stemmed the German advance on the northern flank - and with that we've held the jury of its first and most dangerous assault. [illegible] divisions are stopped was might have swung up in behind our [illegible] the first critical [illegible] stage of the German offensive. [illegible] In addition to the great material power [illegible] they threw into our thinly held line, they had the element of surprise. He had to avoid a very dangerous blow, to roll with the punch, to keep his feet in the ring and at the same time marshal for us to hold firm. This was done, and today, after six days of fighting and wearing, of ceaseless work and movement we have built a wall against [illegible] the enemy in the north.

The battle [illegible] the Germans have by no means exhausted themselves. They still have fresh divisions to throw in. Every account of stemming these new forces as to keep the first attack [illegible] the enemy must now, in its last struggles at least, get certain [illegible] and he can be pretty sure that this new blow will come because up until now the Germans have had no decisive success. The ground they have gained is not vital to us, and the casualties they have inflicted have not been too severe. [illegible] they will be making another move — and this time they will not [illegible] unprepared. Since the offensive began the area behind our lines has been incredible activity [illegible]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Date 21 DEC 1944
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FIELD PRESS

page the [illegible] swift and skillfull organization of defenses deserves high praise. All day and all night staffs have been feverishly active calls have gone out to battalions, regiments, divisions to get up and move. The next days threat had to be anticipated, because a road that was clear for a convoy that night might be cut the next morning. German tanks and armored cars were farming out in all directions. And the positions to be taken had to be far enough back so that they could be consolidated the men and guns dug in, the vehicles dispersed before they would have to fight. Still they couldn't be so far back as to let the Germans any ground. Supplies and ammunition, gasoline and food had to be channelled through to outfits that had suddenly moved a hundred miles. And it was against a background of threat and confusion that this organization took place. One officer wearily putting down one receiver and lifting another mumbled to me as the higher officers and staffs It sounds like the stock market crash in 1929. But we kept our feet on the ground and worked and slowly shaped some sort of order out of confusion.

But we couldn't have done it if it hadn't been for the work and courage of the average soldier. For several nights now we've driven scores of miles over roads jammed thick with convoys moving, moving, moving. Vehicles in ditches were pulled out. Lost vehicles and convoys were put right. And in between MP's rushed out/Germans in jeeps who were riding behind our lines to get information and do damage. And with units pouring in from everywhere it's been hard to see how they could all be manned. But they were.

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Date 21 DEC 1944
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FIELD PRESS CENSOR

And the soldier in the battle area who's stuck to his post ~~of~~ antiaircraft and artillery outfits overrun on lonely hills ~~the~~ infantry and quartermaster units suddenly faced with tanks. Inexperienced new ~~regiments~~, who were ~~suddenly~~ one moment up against the greatest striking force of the veteran German army.

These men fought and some of them died. ~~And~~ And some of them are fighting now ~~by~~ holding road centers and hill positions to cut the roads of the German advance. They are fighting in hedgehogs/miles behind the fluctuating front ~~by~~ defending ammunition and gasoline stores that the enemy hoped tocapture. We know that the Germans planned and depended on ~~gaining~~ capturing enough of our gasoline to sustain their drive. They failed.

~~We know that another blow is coming -- a vicious and powerful one.~~ That we must meet.

This is a time for toughness and courage in the individual soldier ~~by~~ and for skill and swift movement by the larger ~~units~~ units. This time of confusion and swift improvisation is the acid test for our army. And it looks as if we'll come out all right.

Richard Hottelet

PASSED FOR PUBLICATION
Date 24 DEC 57

VIA PREWI URGENT PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING NEW YORK

21 December 1944

Herewith genelctric december 21st:

We've stemmed the German advance on the northern flank - and with that we've held the fury of his first and most dangerous assault, which The divisions are stopped might have swung up behind our seventh army corps, and behind the ninth army. This was the first critical stage of the German offensive. In addition to the great material power they threw into our thinly held line, they had the element of surprise. The First Army had to avoid a very dangerous blow - to roll with the punch - to keep its and on feet in the ring at the same time marshal forces to hold firm. This was done, and tonight, after six days of fighting and weaving, of ceaseless work and movement we have built a wall against the enemy on the north.

But the battle is still not finished. The Germans have by no means exhausted themselves. They still have fresh divisions to using throw in. Instead of these new forces to keep the first attack going -- to add speed and power to something already North underway -- the enemy must now, in his push at least, get certain another attack started. We can be that this new blow will come because up until now the Germans have had no decisive success. The ground they have gained is not vital to us. And the casualties they have inflicted have not been too severe.

because they've got to get results
They will be making another move/-- and this time they will not catch us unprepared. Since the offensive began the area behind our lines has seen incredible activity -- and the

swift and skilfull organization of defenses deserves high praise. All day and all night staffs have been feverishly active -- calls have gone out to battalions, regiments, divisions to get up and move. The next days threat had to be anticipated, because a road that was clear for a convoy that night might be cut the next morning. German tanks and armored cars were fanning out in all directions. And the positions to be taken had to be far enough back so that they could be consolidated -- the men and guns dug in, the vehicles dispersed -- before they would have to fight. Still they couldn't be so far back as to GIVE the Germans any ground. ---- Supplies and ammunition, gasoline and food had to be channelled through to outfits that had suddenly moved a hundred miles. --- And it was against a background of threat and confusion that this organization took place. One officer, wearily putting down one receiver and lifting another mumbled to me - It sounds like the stock market crash in 1929. --- But the higher officers and staffs kept their feet on the ground and worked - and slowly shaped some sort of order out of confusion.

But we couldn't have done it if it hadn't been for the work and courage of the average soldier. For several nights now I've driven scores of miles over roads jammed thick with convoys - moving, moving, moving. Vehicles in ditches were pulled out. Lost vehicles and convoys were put right. And in between MP's fished out Germans in jeeps who were riding behind our lines to get information and do damage. --- With units pouring in from everywhere it's been hard to see how they could all be manned. But they were.

And the soldier in the battle area who's stuck to his post -- antiaircraft and artillery outfits overrun on lonely hills -- infantry and quarter-master units suddenly faced with tanks. Inexperienced new regiments, who were ~~suddenly~~ one moment up against the greatest striking force of the veteran German army.

These men fought and some of them died. ~~And~~ And some of them are fighting now -- holding road centers and hill positions to cut the roads of the German advance. They are fighting in ~~miles~~ inched echoes behind the fluctuating front - defending ammunition and gasoline stores that the enemy hoped to capture. We know that the Germans planned and depended on ~~capturing~~ capturing enough of our gasoline to sustain their drive. They failed.

We know that another blow is coming -- a vicious and powerful blow. That we must meet.

CBS Hottelet 1630 21 December 1944

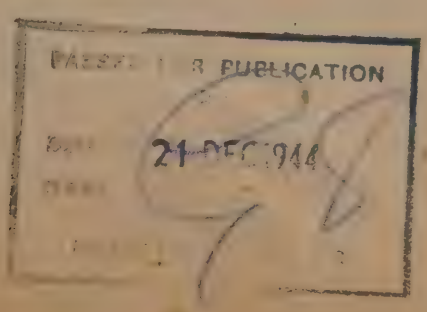
We can give you one piece of good news of the offensive.
X ~~The progress of our~~ countermeasures against the German enemy's
our front on the northern flank has been holding firm. Several of the fifteen Panzer and infantry divisions he's thrown in trying for days to swing up to the right -- to wedge in behind the troops we've got ~~[illegible]~~ ON THE ROER RIVER. and to drive on to the city of Liege.
Our front HAS HELD ON A LINE RUNNING ROUGHLY EAST-WEST, 24 MILES BELOW AACHEN. ~~[illegible] held firmx~~ The town of Stavelot, where German tanks and infantry were fighting yesterday, has now been recaptured./We have kept the town of Malmedy --- and blocked the way to the north.

In the Malmedy sector the enemy dropped some more paratroopers to beat his way on, b

This is only an interim report - because fighting has not ~~stopped.~~ SLACKENED. But it's good to be able to tell you that we have guns and tanks and infantry where three days ago there were just roads and farms, open to the German advance.

Elsewhere on the front the fighting is still confused. Farther south enemy massed tanks and infantry have pushed on still farther west. But at various places in behind the German columns we have strong points ~~in towns and on hills that are~~ holding out. The important road ~~junction~~ CENTER ~~town~~ of St. Vith is one of our hedgehogs.

This is a time for toughness and courage for the individual soldier -- and for skill and swift movement for the larger units. This time of confusion and swift improvisation is the acid test for our army. And it looks as if we'll come out all right.



CBS Hottelet 1300 21 December 1944

The situation on the First Army front has not improved, but at various points along the line of the German breakthrough we have stopped German spearheads. And I've just come back from a sector where we are counterattacking. At that point we've got some German infantry and armored vehicles cut off and are attacking to annihilate them.

This is not a big operation, this counterthrust of ours, but is does show the mood of the Army. Passive defense is not in our book. If we haven't uncorked anything large in the way of a counterpush yet it's not because we don't want to, or because we don't realize the advantages of attacking --- it's because countermeasures take time. It takes a certain amount of hours to move over roads -- to get into position. Heavy traffic makes going slow. But those aren't alibis. The stuff is coming in-- you see that on every road you go down.

In the meanwhile the Germans have not lessened the strength of their attack, (IN PLACES THEY'VE CHANGED DIRECTION TO FLOW AROUND OUR STRONGPOINTS) and their main spearhead is still dangerous. We can now tell you that five or six German Panzer Divisions ~~have been~~ WERE thrown in by the enemy, backed up by eight or nine infantry divisions. --- And it's completely in keeping with the nature of their offensive that the Germans are ~~furnishing~~ PUTTING all their ~~strength in it~~ (REMAINING STRENGTH INTO IT). Many of the divisions we're fighting now we beat up pretty badly in Normandie. In the last months they've been training, getting new men and new equipment. And not only have they been reestablished -- but some of the ones which are the backbone of the offensive have been reestablished in full strength, and more. It's been a long time since a German division with its full complement of men and guns and vehicles has appeared on any battlefield.

Certainly every piece of evidence that comes in confirms what we've been saying - that this is the Germans big attack. They realize it too and are fighting furiously. In the little pocket that we're beginning to clean out now, for instance, these SS men fought literally to the death. At one strong point they were defending, our men found forty

PASSED FOR PUBLICATION
21 DEC 1944

German corpses, and not a single live German. This morning, when I was there xxxxxxxxx this unit was continuing its counterattack -- and the men and vehicles were pushing ahead in the thick fog that's hung over the area for most of the past few days. As I came by in my jeep one of these vague figures on my right shouted out -- It's like fighting in a turkish bath, except it's so goldarn cold.

The pattern of this great battle has not yet settled down. It is certainly by no stretch of the imagination nearing its end, and the Germans may indeed gain more ground before it's over. But the men here are fighting and working to get the situation under control, and I personally feel that they will before too long.

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VIA PREW!

URGENT PRESS COLUMBIA-NEW YORK

We're getting the first faint indications that, ~~surprisingly~~ at some points, the tide of battle is beginning to turn in our favor. At several points the Germans made no progress today, and one of the German spearheads was pushed back several thousand yards by one of our veteran divisions ~~which was pushed into the line~~.

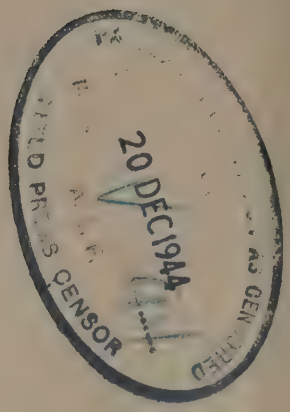
20 December 1944

[illegible] electric originating brussels december twentieth:

tonight [illegible] are fighting one of the decisive battles of this war. It's the largest, most intensive single battle we've fought in this war so far. It's decisive not because as far as this battle goes the outcome of the war is at stake; win lose or draw we know Germany must lose the war. But in the snowflecked wooded hills and valleys of western Belgium -- in the dreary skies or gray december mists, along roads and soggy fields and in towns our army is working out the answers to a lot of questions that are most important for the peace.

One of these questions is - could the American army have beaten the German army in its prime? Well, the crack troops we're meeting right now are the strongest striking force the enemy ever had. The best of his manpower, the best of his equipment is here -- his huge new King Tiger tanks, his self-propelled guns, his new V 1 is supporting the offensive, so are V2 and a couple of other mortars. And what he's got he's got in plenty. In weeks of hurried movement at night he brought up hundreds of thousands of gallons of gas line, thousands of tons of ammunition. ---- Men and weapons and tactics have been forged in the furnace of five years of war. They're much better than anything the enemy had in 1940 - or even when he attacked Russia.

And his planning is as bold as it ever was. He planned his [illegible] and planned in terms of a breakthrough. He used all his tricks. Paratroopers dropped behind our lines were supposed to block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roads and create confusion. They didn't succeed. But the Germans tried another trick that's served them well before --- they sent agents into our lines, both by parachute and by filtering through. With the front as confused as it's been it wasn't hard to send captured jeeps over into our lines. These jeeps had American markings, the men wore American uniforms, and had captured American credentials. Most didn't work very well. One of the stopped me in the inky, jerky blackness of the night and told me how they had caught the jeepload on that corner a couple of hours before. The men all spoke perfect American, and looked genuine enough. But they didn't know the answer to one little question that any American knows. [illegible]

And, with tricks and ruses, with strategy and strength, the enemy combined brutality. This is his last chance and he knows it -- he's letting nothing stand in his way. And the murder of American prisoners of war and Belgian civilians is evidence of that. So -- if we end this present battle with clearcut victory, we'll have beaten the best Germany ever had to offer.

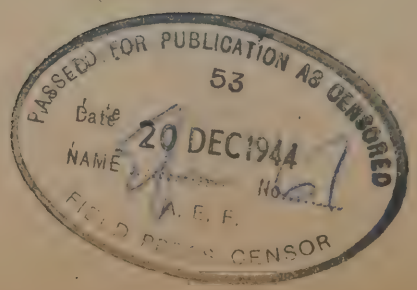
But this battle also reveals that the present leaders of Germany will not stop fighting until they're crushed. There is no holding back here of reserves. It's an all out effort, and it could have farreaching political consequences

Richard Hottelet

20 December 1944

URGENT PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEW YORK

The news from the First Army front this morning is still grave. The German counteroffensive is continuing. The situation is still fluid. --- Both the Germans and ourselves are throwing more strength into the battle. It is fast shaping up to be the biggest battle fought in western Europe in this war. So far it has not reached its climax. We can expect days more of uncertainty, of vague description until the situation is completely in hand --- and perhaps then there may be some dramatic developments that will be in our favor. --- At the moment we cannot give you any names of towns which would show you where the main centers of battle are. We are allowed to tell you that the German Panzer spearheads had driven westward twenty miles to the Stavelot area, which is about twenty miles southeast of Liege. And that farther south another column, heading around St. Vith had reached the town of Maspelt -- --- In the early days of the attack/German crack troops sent their Panthers and Tigers rumbling down roads in swift pincer movements, and succeeded in cutting off and surrounding some American units. To some extent these troops are now lost -- and in certain instances they are still fighting on behind the German front. --- Today, as I've said, we cannot give you up to the minute locations. But I can tell you that great efforts are being made by General Bradley to meet the situation. The roads behind our lines are crammed with tanks and guns and men heading for the battle area. --- Strength enough to meet the German threat -- powerful as it is. It's not too easy, though, to organize a defense when a powerful and determined enemy has broken into a rear area. I flew over the area of one of the German columns this morning, at about half past ten. And down in the valleys amid the Ardennes hills, and the High Ven hills, the fog lay in thick white rivers. It was impossible to see anything at all below. And the main routes of the German advance have been along those roads.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VIA PREWI 19 December 1944

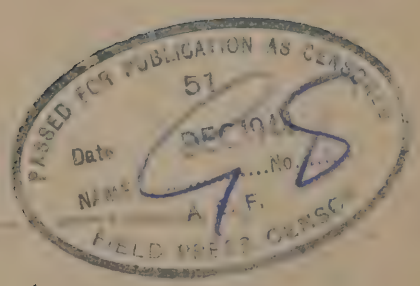
URGENT PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEW YORK

Newscast: The German counteroffensive is still developing, and the situation has not become any more favorable. The enemy has thrown still more troops into his attack -- and by now it's clear that this is the strongest, most determined counteroffensive since we landed in Western Europe. ---- By the time I left the front this morning we had not yet completely brought the situation under control. The Germans were still advancing -- not only penetrating deeper westward, but also curving around to link up with other spearheads farther south. At one or two points German tank columns had actually joined up, and encircled some of our troops. But everywhere along the front, there was heavier fighting. The Germans are not advancing as swiftly as they had been the first three days. We have rushed more divisions to the threatened areas, which was a good piece of fast improvisation and movement. --

And the German points have been slowed down by our road blocks, by our heavy, 90 millimeter antiaircraft guns were rushed into position. They (the reinforcements and) bridge demolition and by our generally stiffened resistance, which knocked out a number of tanks. Our fighter bombers too, have done splendid work. They've gotten off the ground in weather that we thought was impossible -- and driving along behind the front we've been delighted and surprised to see them wheeling around at the base of the low gray clouds. --- And they've done damage, too. I spoke to one captured SS man last night who told how one of the German attack routes was completely choked by vehicles our fighter bombers had destroyed.

The progress of the German offensive and the fact that we haven't been able to stop it as yet is mainly due to the terrific push with which it started. It is a bold plan, cleverly conceived and skilfully carried out.

RICHARD HOTTELET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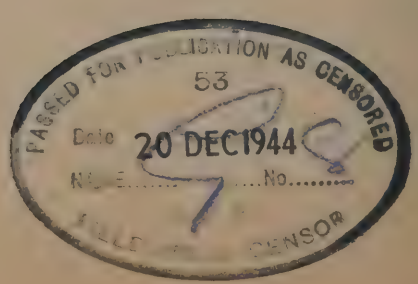
ADD NEWS BROADCAST:

On a thirty mile front south of Monschau -- a front that started out as a series of swift stabs, the enemy threw division after division in -- panzer and infantry. By now he has ~~something like eighteen~~ SEVERAL divisions engaged. In the first day or two he overran our positions, and when we began to stiffen in front of him he started slugging it out. With his ground forces he has been using his air, too, much more actively than he's done for months. Last night he bombed and strafed again, far behind our lines. ~~And he's been using long-range artillery too. It must be some new kind of artillery, because it's estimated to come from a range of 40 to 45 thousand yards - about 27 or 28 miles.~~ ---- ~~But~~ TIMES when you're anywhere near the front itself there aren't five minutes that go by that you don't hear a flying bomb overhead buzzing westward.

The Germans are really determined to press on -- prisoners of war speak of a feeling almost of intoxication behind the front that the German army, after six months of steady defeat, should be on the move once more. ~~They say they're headed for Liege and for the Meuse river.~~ --- As a matter of fact they haven't so very far to go, if you count only miles. They've already SOME TWENTY advanced more than thirty miles into Belgium at one point. --- But there's no real reason to believe that the enemy will win any large-scale strategic success. Striking power is one thing. He struck hard ~~and caught us off balance.~~ But staying power is another. And he must sustain his offensive if he wants to do real far-reaching damage. --- So far this offensive hasn't made any difference on the First Army front east of Aachen. We're still there, ~~and with no intention of pulling out.~~ --- The situation is still grave farther south - but ~~there's no doubt we'll hold.~~

Richard Lottelet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19 December 1944

COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEWYORK

Benekectric show december nineteenth:

A large part of western Belgium is a battlefield today. Along roads that we dashed over in our jeep a week ago, we now go crawling along, asking from point topoint what the situation is. And every day since the German offensive began early saturday morning there've been new roads that we couldn't go down - more towns that it wasn't safe to get into. --- Punching westward from the German border an enemy spearhead of 11 divisions with tiger tanks and Panther tanks has driven deep into our lines, and behind them have come the enemy infantry and artillery to consolidate.

It hasn't been a good five days for us. We weren't used to giving up ground we had won. But the enemy caught us at a point in the line held by some new divisions, and he threw the cream of the German army in against them. They fought - but they were not only outclassed, they were outnumbered. In the first day or so the German numerical superiority at the main points of attack was three and four to one. And the enemy was able to pour through. On saturday and Sunday it was actually a breakthrough, but our countermeasures were swift, and we began to seal it off. As we drove along we could see more and more trucks, tanks, tank destroyers, guns, infantrymen grimfaced infantrymen pouring down into the battle area. Men who had been on leave were called back. Men who were in the rear were sent up. -- There's been an air of urgency behind our front, because the situation has always been grave. But there was no panic, and our wheels moved very swiftly. -- All day and all night they moved, over smooth highways and gluey lanes, through green fields and snowy woods. The men are angry that the Germans could uncork this

19 December 1944

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surprise and they're all out to stop it. The antiaircraft gunners guns
~~xxzxzx~~ at roadblocks with their ~~xxxxxx~~ pointed straight out along the ground are waiting for the Tigers and Panthers - and getting them. Our infantry and tanks ~~and even paratroopers~~, our artillery ~~ix~~ --- all of them are ~~gxing~~ thinking only of stopping the enemy.

in this area
The Belgian people/are grimfaced, too. They've seen us retreat, these last four days, for the first time. They've stood in the doorways of their little houses, as they stood in them when we first came in. But ~~xxxxx~~ there are no flags out, no smiles. The waving of a few hands is the slow, sorrowful wave of people saying goodbye to vehicles
their good friends. And as our ~~xxxxxx~~ and equipment have pulled out of threatened points, splashing the houses with mud, the people in the doorways and the windows have just looked at them, Hurt and bewilderment in their eyes. For these people, after a few brief months of liberation, the Germans are coming again. And, though war passed them by without too much suffering and destruction in 1940 and again in 1944, this time they know that their homes and villages will be hit. They feel we will be back, but they feel too that the pretty little Ardennes and towns
villages/~~xx~~ will then be the tangled, ragged heaps of brick and plaster and mud that war has left in Normandie and Germany.

there are no great streams of refugees. Roads have gone to fast + confused.

Germans who come more brutally and ruthlessly than they ever did — because there's no pretense here of conquest. It's a last desperate blow to inflict pain + get revenge. Already substantiated reports of massacres the murder of civilians have come in.

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URGENT PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEW YORK

Insert G enelectric december nineteenth:

Some German, prisoners tell how their officers gave them strong propaganda ~~xxx~~ to emphasize the importance of the operation. They were told that the ~~xxxx~~ recapture of Aachen would be a christmas present for Adolf Hitler -- that they would spend New Year's Eve in Paris and that if they kept up the superhuman achievements expected of them they could win the war in western Europe. --- But even if the German High Command did not expect such impossible results there is no doubt that they are completely shooting their bolt. Hitler ordered the operation and gave the experienced old soldier von Rundstedt a free hand to carry it out with professional military skill. And the enemy brought in all his reserves, along ~~xxx~~ entire western front, from Norway to Switzerland for a now or never try. endinsert

Richard Hottelet

VIA PRESWI

page three 2 CBS Chotteau 2 19 December 1944
URGENT PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEW YORK

SECOND THIRD GERMELECTRIC: But, where we and the Belgians are grim and determined, the Germans are elated - almost intoxicated. They had prepared long for this drive, and put all that was left of their strength into it. It had to work. I spoke with some prisoners last night, from the crack Adolf Hitler [illegible] Panzer Division. They told of the feverishness of the night before the jumpoff -- they told of American soldiers standing by their guns until they were literally overrun by tanks. --- They described how they had captured American supply dumps and fought for the food and cigarettes and gasoline.

Every one of them said that this was the big effort -- if this succeeded, things would go well. If it failed, there would be no chnace of launching another drive. They were headed for Liege and the Meuse. They said their intention was to cut our lines, capture so many of our supplies and inflict so much damage that our own offensive would have to come to a stop. The Germans would then spend the rest of the winter reorganizing.

This is the enemy's strategic objective -- but he's got another one. He is out to make as much propaganda out of it as he can to bolster the spirit of his people at home. He has an entire regiment of reporters and photographers travelling with the spearhead -- sending word back - luridx word that the German army is attacking again. The German reconnaissance column must have thought it was 1940 again too, because they arrogantly kept sending messages back in open language.

But this German offensive, bold and strong and dangerous as it is is no 1940. They not only haven't/got the strength -- and but their up against a different army. We know our own power, and we know even if we're caught off balance that we can beat the enemy down.

CBS Hottelet 1300 18 December 1944

The big German counteroffensive on the American First Army front is still going on. The enemy has poured more infantry and more tanks into the battle, ~~and has continued his advance~~ this morning, after a pause of about twelve hours. — The entire front — stretching about thirty miles south of Monschau, ~~and in the area east of Malmedy and St. Vith~~ is in motion. On our side countermeasures are being taken - on the enemy's side more strength is being thrown in. The weight of his tanks has already given him a penetration of a number of miles deep into our front. ~~Right~~ When I left the front two hours ago the situation was still fluid. ~~Because, not only is the enemy continuing with his main push, and fanning out with his spearheads through~~ X ~~If,~~ he's ~~also~~ still pushing at several points farther up and farther down the front. He wants to ~~hold~~ make it hard for us to assemble troops to meet the main threat.

There's no doubt about it that this is the major German effort. ~~Three~~ Some of the best units in the German army are involved in this penetration. ~~breakthrough~~. The panzer division spearheading the main thrust is a crack division that has been on the most important ~~the~~ sector of half a dozen fronts since it was formed — ~~in Russia, in Italy, in France. Its appearance has always meant that its sector was extremely important to the German High Command.~~

Before the Germans launched this counteroffensive von Rundstedt, the German commander in chief in the west issued an order of the day to the troops under his command. It read:

Soldiers of the West Front, your great hour has struck. Streng attacking armies are today advancing against the Americans. I need tell you no more. You all feel it. Everything is at stake. You have the sacred duty to give everything, and to achieve the superhuman for Fuehrer and Fatherland".

That order of the day about says it. ~~This is the German~~ probably This ~~great~~ big offensive in the west ~~is~~ is intended to be a serious threat to our whole army position and to break the back of our winter offensive ~~against~~ toward the Rhine.

There is no hit and run character about this -- after tanks and infantry made the initial breach, the enemy moved his artillery in. He means to consolidate and holdeverything he takes. Behind the front right now he has more divisions ready to follow up. --- The preparation for this offensive took weeks. Paratroopers who have been dropped have revealed that they were alerted and formed into special combat teams for this push three and four weeks ago. --- The gasoline that he had to accumulate was prodigious, and must have drained his operational reserve.

The enemy means to sustain this offensive, because he knows that if and when it collapses, he will have shot his main bolt; and if we can recover and follow up quickly enough we will be fighting the decisive battle for the Rhine right here.

Ground forces our bombers and artillery have been hitting the Germans hard. And last night our night fighters and antiaircraft destroyed another 91 of his planes.

The enemy right now is matching us strength for strength, and there's no question in anyone's mind -- no matter how fluid the situation is now -- that we can outslug him in the end.

VUA PREWI

CBS Hottelet 1400 17 December 1944

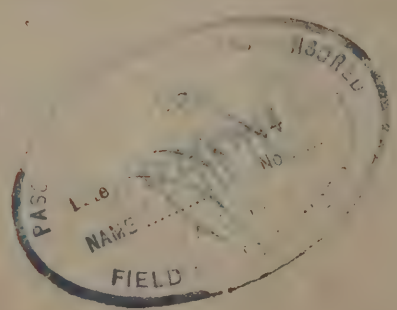
URGENT PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEW YORK

The Germans have begun a major counteroffensive on the First United States Army front about thirty miles south of Aachen. They are attacking and advancing westward into our lines in the area south of Monschau. By noon today they had penetrated overall and fanning out. miles into our lines and were still advancing. ---- The German counteroffensive is being carried out with divisions, including Panzer Divisions. During the night scores of paratroopers were dropped behind our lines to cut communications.

There is no doubt that we were taken by surprise, Once the main thrust was recognized, swift countermeasures were taken to bring the German advance to a stop, but by that time we had already suffered painful casualties. Right now fighting is still going on with several German spearheads, and fortunately the weather improved slightly during the forenoon so that our fighter bombers could go in and attack.

The German offensive began at seven o'clock yesterday morning. For days our reconnaissance had spotted additional movement behind the German lines in this area, but there was no indication -- either from the amount, or the units involved, that any major opperation was being prepared. Then, night before last, German artillery all along our front opened up in an extremely heavy barrage -- throwing thousands of shells into not only our forward positions, and supply lines up toward the front, but in towns and communications centers many miles behind the front. The barrage was heaviest along a front south of Monschau, in our Eighth Army Corps sector --- and, at seven o'clock yesterday morning, the enemy began a general offensive along a front that stretched for thirty miles. -- Most of these were small, sharp counterattacks -- in company and battalion strength --- nothing more than we have been getting against our forward positions for weeks. But, after a few hours, it became apparent that they were all being pushed forward more vigorously than they ever had been. And it also became apparent that on a front of six or seven miles, south of the town of Monschau, something much bigger was in progress.

There, in the first few hours of fighting, our forward elements were either overrun or pushed back. The enemy followed up with tanks as well as infantry -- mainly running along a good road through the wooded, hilly country. After eight or ten hours we saw that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URGENT PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEW YORK

the enemy was attacking with divisions -- including ~~[illegible]~~ Panzer Divisions, because the pressure on our line ~~at the focal point of attack~~ continued more heavily than before. ~~As a matter of fact, the picture coming in to our headquarters revealed that the character of the action was changing. Most of the smaller attacks had died out, and the big attack - instead of continuing as an advance along a six mile front - narrowed down to a single spearhead, about a mile wide or so wider.~~ Into this attack, the enemy poured his men and his tanks -- with convoys of literally scores of tanks and long columns of vehicles. He could afford to do this because weather over both the front and our bases completely cancelled out our air power.

The attack continued, without meeting any effective American resistance until we stopped it after some eight mile penetration, after darkness had closed down.

But the Germans still had another trick up their sleeve -- beginning at about seven o'clock last night they sent an unusually large number of airplanes over our lines. I was up at the front on the First Army's northern flank east of Aachen -- and even up there we had air alerts all during the night. At first it seemed they were reconnaissance planes, because they dropped flares through small breaks in the clouds. But then others came over dropping bombs and strafing. It was only hours later that we began to get the first news that the enemy's main intention was to drop paratroopers.

He dropped them at widely scattered points along more than fifty miles of the First Army front. They were not saboteurs in civilian clothes - they were fighting paratroopers, dropped in combat sticks. Their mission was to occupy road junctions, set up road blocks, attack some of our headquarters and in general create confusion behind our lines which would delay us taking countermeasures against the main offensive. ~~Hundreds of these paratroopers were dropped -- mostly~~ young ones, making their first jump, but with a sprinkling of veterans. Some were specially trained in demolition and carried charges ~~of explosives to blow up road bridges.~~ --- Special American details went out immediately and took many of them prisoner. The mopping up was still going on today.

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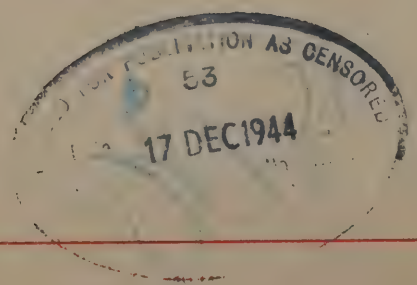
Then, early this morning, the enemy's armor and infantry pushed off again. This time he began to fan out, ~~with about three spearheads pushing along roads~~ in different directions. But, by this time our countermeasures were beginning to take hold, and the German progress was slower.

~~The German penetration is a thin, sharp~~ salient ~~too narrow to be maintained for any length of time. So it looks as if the enemy will probably attempt to hook it around and turn it into a battle of encirclement.~~ Our fighter bombers got up today and bombed one column on the road - a column of at least a hundred motorvehicles, fifty tanks and self propelled guns and even horsedrawn wagons, heading west. ~~Our pilots say the vehicles were marked with white circles for identification from the air.~~ Our bombs hit the column heavily and knocked out a number of the tanks and SP guns.

This German counteroffensive is on the largest scale they've tried since Mortain in the Normandie beachhead. There's no doubt that it's their major effort. But there is no reason to believe that it will seriously endanger the First Army front. The purpose is obviously to take the pressure off the Roer River front, farther north, where the American First and Ninth Armies are threatening the approaches to Cologne. This present German attack is coming across the thickly wooded hilly terrain of the Ramscheid Eifel hills, and its reserves communications are long and not too good. The reason for its initial success is mainly that it was launched against a weak sector of our lines, ~~which was not strongly held.~~

Although the situation is not certainly not clear yet, there's no doubt that this German offensive will be costly. We are suffering losses, but so is the enemy. And what he loses now on this sector he will not have to help defend the Ruine. ~~But it looks as if the offensive will make a difference in the American time table.~~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17 DEC 1944

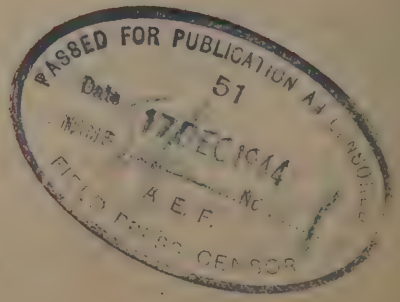
URGENT PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEW YORK

The Germans have begun a major counteroffensive on the First United States Army front, about thirty miles south of Aachen. They are attacking and advancing westward into our lines in the area south of Monschau. By noon today they had penetrated up to twelve miles into our lines and were still advancing, and fanning out. The German counteroffensive is being carried out with about twelve divisions, including Panzer Divisions. This morning hundreds of paratroopers were dropped behind our lines to cut communications.

There is no doubt that we were taken completely by surprise. Once the main thrust was recognized, swift countermeasures were taken to bring the German advance to a stop, but by that time we had already suffered painful casualties. Right now fighting is still going on with several German spearheads, and fortunately the weather improved slightly during the forenoon so that our fighter bombers could go in and attack. But the situation is still serious.

The German offensive began at seven o'clock yesterday morning. For days our reconnaissance had spotted additional movement behind the German lines in this area, but there was no indication -- either from the amount, or the units involved, that any major opration was being prepared. Then, night before last, German artillery all along our front opened up in an extremely heavy barrage -- throwing thousands of shells into not only our forward positions, and supply lines up toward the front, but in towns and communications centers many miles behind the front. The barrage was heaviest along a front south of Monschau, in our Eighth Army Corps sector --- and, at seven o'clock yesterday morning, the enemy began a general offensive along a front that stretched for thirty miles. -- Most of these were small, sharp counterattacks -- in company and battalion strength --- nothing more than we have been getting against our forward positions for weeks. But, after a few hours, it became apparent that they were all being pushed forward more vigorously than they ever had been. And it also became apparent that on a front of six or seven miles, south of the town of Monschau, something much bigger was in progress.

There, in the first few hours of fighting, our forward elements were either overrun or pushed back. The enemy followed up with tanks as well as infantry -- [illegible] along a good road through [illegible] hilly country. After eight or ten hours we saw that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URGENT PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEW YORK

the enemy was attacking with divisions -- including four Panzer Divisions, because the pressure on our line at the focal point of attack continued more heavily than before. As a matter of fact, the picture coming in to our headquarters revealed that the character of the action was changing. Most of the smaller attacks had died out, and the big attack - instead of continuing as an advance along a six mile front - narrowed down to a single spearhead, about a mile or so wide. Into this the enemy poured his men and his tanks -- with literally scores of tanks and long columns of vehicles. He could afford to do this because weather over both the front and our bases completely cancelled out our air power.

The attack continued, without meeting any effective American resistance until we stopped it after an eight mile penetration, after darkness had closed down.

But the Germans still had another trick up their sleeve -- beginning at about seven o'clock last night they sent an unusually large number of airplanes over our lines. I was up at the front on the First Army's northern flank east of Aachen -- and even up there we had air alerts all during the night. At first it seemed they were reconnaissance planes, because they dropped flares through small breaks in the clouds. But then others came over dropping bombs and strafing. It was only hours later that we began to get the first news that the enemy's main intention was to drop paratroopers.

He dropped them at widely scattered points along more than fifty miles of the First Army front. They were not saboteurs in civilian clothes - they were fighting paratroopers, dropped in combat sticks. Their mission was to occupy road junctions, set up road blocks, attack some of our headquarters and in general create confusion behind our lines which would delay us taking countermeasures against the main offensive. Hundreds of these paratroopers were dropped -- mostly young ones, making their first jump, but with a sprinkling of veterans. Some were specially trained in demolition and carried charges of explosives to blow up road bridges. --- Special American details went out immediately and took many of them prisoner. The mopping up was still going on today.

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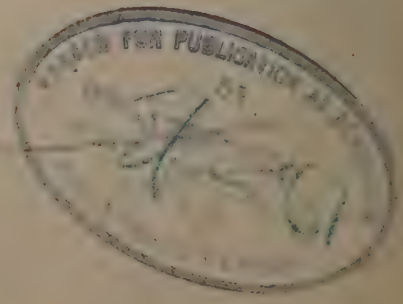

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VIA PREWI

URGENT PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEW YORK

Then, early this morning, the enemy's armor and infantry pushed off again. This time he began to fan out, with about three spearheads pushing along roads in different directions. But, by this time our countermeasures were beginning to take holdx, and the German progress was slower.

The German penetration is a thin, sharp salient --- too narrow to be maintained for any length of time. So it looks as if the enemy will probably attempt to nook it around and turn it into a battle of encirclement. Our fighter bombers got up today and bombed one column on the road - a column of at least a hundred motorvehicles, fifty tanks and self propelled guns and even horsedrawn wagons, heading west. Our pilots say the vehicles were marked with white circles for identification from the air. Our bombs hit the column heavily and knocked out a number of the tanks and SP guns.

This German counteroffensive is on the largest scale they've tried since Mortain in the Normandie beachhead. There's no doubt that it's their major effort. But there is no reason to believe that it will seriously endanger the First Army front. The purpose is obviously to take the pressure off the Roer River front, farther north, where the American First and Ninth Armies are threatening the approaches to Cologne. This present German attack is coming across the thickly wooded hilly terrain of the Schnee Eifel hills, and its rearward communications are long and not too good. The reason for its initial success is mainly that it was unleashed against a quiet sector of our lines, which was not strongly held.

Although the situation is certainly not clear yet, there's no doubt that this German offensive will be contained. We are suffering losses, but so is the enemy. And what he loses now on this sector he will not have to help defend the Rhine. But it looks as if the offensive will make a difference in the American time table.

Hottelet

ARMY AIR FORCES
17 DEC 1944

PASSED FOR PUBLICATION AS CORRECTED
Date 17 DEC 1917
NAME ..... No. .....
A. E. F.
FIELD PRESS CENSOR

CBS Hottelet 1300 12 December 1944

After four weeks of heavy fighting the American First Army now actually holds part of the western bank of the Roer River. Our infantry , pushing on eastward from the town of Huertgen, reached it at several points yesterday afternoon, fighting all the way, and beating off a counter attack when they finally got there. Today we've spread along the bank and hold about a thousand yards of it. It's just where the river runs through a fairly deep wooded gully, though, so having the bank there probably won't do us much good.

That's upstream from Dueren. Below Dueren we're still pushing in on the river but haven't quite gotten there yet. And we're also moving on toward the city itself. All along the flat western bank between Dueren and Juelich the German rearguard forces are doing their best to keep us away from possible crossing points. Self propelled guns and antitank guns in the villages of Lorzweiler, Merzweiler, just across the river from Dueren are giving us trouble. And we're still fighting in the other village strongpoints like Pier, and Horken. But the enemy has not been able to stop our relentless push toward the river.

It won't be very long before the Germans have to make up their mind whether to leave their men and equipment on the western bank as a suicide bridgehead, or to try to pull them back and blow the remaining bridges behind them. The chances are that they'll fight until we're through the line of defending villages and then try to rescue what they can across to the other bank.

But even when this stage is reached -- which will probably be tomorrow or the next day -- the battle for the Roer River will not be over. The stream is swift and swollen after weeks of rain. The Germans can control the level and keep it high. So physically crossing it is not going to be easy; but already the enemy has organized a tight and strong defense line on the other bank -- which is certainly no less strong than the one we've been fighting our way through for four weeks. Already he's moved the bulk of his artillery back across the river and been getting for more than a week he's been coming from there. And he's moved reinforcements into the area to man the standard field emplacements and fortifications he's been digging for the last three months.

Unless something unexpected happens the battle to cross the Roer and to get an operational bridgehead on the other side will be at least as hard as the fight up to it. Maybe more so.

PASSED FOR PUBLICATION
BY
Date 12 DEC 1944
NAME ..... No.....
A. E. F.
FIELD PRESS CENSOR

PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEW YORK

16 December 1944

HEREWITH REPORT FROM OVERSEAS:

Upstream from the city of Dueren the First Army is still fighting its way toward the Roer River. It is still the same tough slugging, over the same sort of ground -- except that it's gotten colder the last DAY OR SO and the mud in spots has begun to freeze. THE ARTILLERY FIRE IS HEAVY AND PROGRESS IS SLOW. (SAME BATTLE) --- This has been going on for weeks, and we sometimes forget that lots of things about it are not the same. --- Especially that very many the men who are doing the fighting are not the ones who began this offensive a month ago. Battle casualties and sickness and accidents have brought a constant stream of replacements to the front -- men who came in green and who learned AS THEY FOUGHT. --- The fact that we are able to sustain our offensive in the face of the enemy's maximum effort shows HOW QUICKLY these new men have quickly become veterans.

I want to tell you about (ONE OF THEM. HIS NAME IS) Staff Sergeant Howell Williamson, AND HE who comes from San Diego, California. THE BOYS IN to the 104th Division CALL HIM SHORTY. (HE CAME IN) only about five weeks ago. He had never had any combat experience. But he learned fast. --- The other day the 415th Infantry Regiment started out to capture one of the enemy strongholds on the west bank of the Roer River - the village of Merken. Shorty, and the other boys of ' Company were told to TAKE a clump of houses north of the the village to secure the flank. They jumped off in pitch darkness at four thirty in the morning, (IN AN ICY WIND) and started across the flat open field. As they moved Shorty heard some moaning and stopped to help someone who had fallen and hurt himself. By the time he had helped the man his own boys

were gone in the darkness ahead. So Shorty struck out on his own. He Hadn't gone far when he bumped into five more stragglers who didn't know where they were going, and then a light machine gun squad that thought it did but wasn't sure. (WAS THE SENIOR NONCOM AND HE) Shorty took them all in tow. —— Over on his left, not far away, was a burning house. It was the right direction for his objective so he headed for that way. The Germans had noticed the night attack by this time, and artillery began to fall in the fields. It was good to keep moving. —— (BUT AS THEY) ~~As Shorty and his men~~ scampered near to the burning house they saw thatthere were a good many more houses around it, that, in fact they had not hit their objective — but had gotten to another town (ENTIRELY.) It was the town of Pier, which was still mostly held by the enemy. —— Dawn was beginning to break, more artillery was coming in,so Shorty decided to get his men under cover in one of the other houses and then look around for a way out. They crept up to a house in the shadow, and heard voices through one of the shattered windows. They didn't sound like GI voices, but you can never be sure — so Shorty,holding his tommy gun at the ready, sneaked up to the front door to have a look around. As he came up to it a figure loomed in the doorway. (IT WORE A FUNNY JACKET .... IT HAD ON SHORT BOOTS.) ~~Shorty shrieked,~~ the man shouted something in German and Shorty winged him. The German dashed back into the house, and down the cellar stairs, (with THE DOUGHBOYS IN A SCRAMBLE) ~~Shorty and his men~~ on his heels. A handgrenade down the ~~cellar~~ stairs brought up nine bewildered Germans (READY AND EAGER TO QUIT.) —— This was getting to be a problem, but at least the GI's were now under cover, so Shorty relaxed. He found one of his prisoners could speak English, and asked him whether there were

any more Germans around. The prisoner looked at him for a minute and said -- Sure there are. They're all around. There's a squad in the house around the corner, and there's another squad in the house right across the street. We've got about a battalion of men in the place.

---- Shorty gulped and looked at his thirteen men. They looked at him. And then HE grinned. told the German, "All right," he " tell your chums here that if any of them gives the alarm, or tries to make a break for WE'VE GOT TWO COMPANIES RIGHT HERE AND THE JOINT IS SURROUNDED." it, you're all dead pigeons." The German caught on.

nd they sat there for a while, the Germans in the cellar and the fourteen GI's on the ground floor. Outside it was full daylight -- and from the other side of town came the sharp sound of battle as other American troops continued their FIGHT FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE. American artillery and mortars were landing close. All this time Shorty was thinking it was a shame for him and thirteen other able bodied American GI's to be sitting in a house doing nothing, while all around him other GI's were fighting to take these towns. nd he was annoyed that he had gotten lost and missed his objective, even though it certainly wasn't his fault. ---- So he decided to do something to help the war. He called the english speaking prisoner out of the cellar and looked him sternly in the eye. Go across the street to that other house and tell those Krauts in there to surrender. Tell them I'll give them two minutes, and if they don't come out I'll blow 'em right to hell. The German was properly impressed and went across the street. WILLIAMSON AND HIS MEN crouched at the window with their most menacing scowl. THEY began to wonder what would happen if (THEIR BLUFF WERE called.

But IT WASN'T. The prisoner must have laid it on even thicker, because in hardly two minutes eight more German soldiers and a lieutenant came dashing across the street to give themselves up. The thirteen GI's were now completely outnumbered by their prisoners, but everything seemed to be going well and theyherded them all down into the cellar. —— Shorty realized, of course, that if he wasn't going to get snarled up with all these PRISONERS he would have to organize a nice, orderly routine. So he did. At twelve oclock he let them cook themselves some lunch, and at three oclock he let them all out into the walled in back yard for a breath of fresh air, and in between he made the prisoners clean up their cellar. —— His idea was; the more things I make these Jerries do, the more likely THEY'LL be to obey me when I sneak them out of here. —— As the afternoon wore on Shorty took a rifle and went up to what was left of the attic to find the best way back. He looked over the ground, and then went over to the other side and looked into the town. There was still tough fighting on the other side, and HE felt sorry that he wasn't helping out. It seemed to him he'd hardly done a thing all day. ——

All of a sudden, he spotted a German walking around a street corner ahead and a bit left. He took quick aim with the rifle and winged him. Then, lying flat on the floor among roof tiles and plaster he waited a while, feeling pretty good. Ten minutes later he saw another German at about the same place and sniped at him, but missed. It was beginning to get dark by then, so he climbed down to get his men and his prisoners ready to move out. As soon as it was really dark THEY formed THE Germans up in column of twos, and marched off across the field. (BUT THEIR WORRIES WEREN'T OVER.) About ten minutes

out a mortar barrage came down in front of them, and Shorty hopped around the group making xx sure none of the Germans disappeared in the confusion. When the barrage lifted ~~xxxxx~~ THEY brought the batch back to ~~xxx~~ THE regimental cage, AND THE IMPROMPTU "TASK FORCE WILLIAMSON" WAS DISBANDED.

SHORTY'S ~~xxxx~~ first question was how his own platoon had been making out in the meanwhile, and he almost got sore when they made him wait till next day to get back to ~~xxxx~~ IT. "Shucks," he said, "I won't get lost again."

~~xxxx

Broadcast - not Via Prewi

CBS Hottelet 1300 GMT 16 December 1944

All along the American First Army front - from south of Juelich down through Luxemburg, last night was a night of heavy German artillery fire. --- And the enemy added to the usual ferocity of his barrages by using rockets and white phosphorus shells. ~~---- Towns that we've taken days ago and that were being shelled heavily before and while we moved in are still being plastered.~~

There's no doubt about it that the Germans are putting in what they have here in the way of hot steel. But even in sectors where mortar and artillery bursts were counted by the hundreds, the First Army improved its positions. Troops of the 83rd Infantry Division went through heavy artillery fire to take another little hamlet near the west bank of the Roer. Farther down one of its regiments advanced a thousand yards to get another hold on the edge of the River.

There were some small counterattacks along the front too, and some movement of tanks was seen, but the most important and most interesting aspect of this present phase IS the artillery. The German army has never been very strong in this arm. We and the Russians and the British (and the French-in-the-last-war) have understood the power of coordinated artillery and used it to better advantage than the Germans. The German army based its tactics and its strategy primarily on the infantry --- when Hitler created his new Wehrmacht he carried on the tradition. And in planning to give it the greatest striking power as an offensive weapon he concentrated on tanks and on close air support rather than on guns. ----- But for the last months the offensive power of the German Wehrmacht has been at an end, and its function has become to plug a gap - to hold ground in the face of our offensive. It has become primarily a political weapon, to gain time and inflict casualties -- in an effort to make the price of victory so high that we will not want to pay it.

Crowded back to the borders of their industrial areas the Germans produced more guns -- and their short supply lines made the flow of large quantities of ammunition, and spare barrels simple. They picked the river lines west of Cologne as their main defense and massed their guns along it. ~~---~~ They've narrowed down our artillery superiority. With direct fire, and time fire they're now making our progress tough and bloody and slow. --- And it'll probably continue that way unless something completely unexpected happens.

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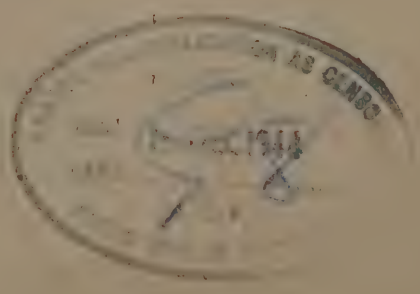

PRESS COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEWYORK 15 December 1944

Herewith friday genelectric:

More than ever this war here on the approaches to Cologne is an infantryman's battle, with all its heartbreaking toughness. There's none of the glamor of swift movement because you can't go thirty miles an hour on your hands and knees, ~~or wriggling through mud on your belly.~~ --- But if the progress is slow it's none the less dearly bought.

You see that if you do what I just did, spend a night in a Field Hospital. Here the/words cold attack, ground gained, stiff opposition -- are translated in terms of lines of shattered bodies stretched on cots. ~~They get only the most severe cases at Field Hospitals, the roughly ten percent who can't be transported to the evacuation hospitals farther back.~~ EVEN SO THERE ARE TOO MANY. --- ~~You see these men lying in the dim light of a long, low shed -- a former storage shed of a German soap factory.~~ BLANKETS COVER THEIR BROKEN BODIES BUT THEIR EYES ARE ~~some of them~~ VISIBLE, SOME OF THEM have just been brought in, and are lying quiet and ashen gray, IN THE DIM LIGHT with thin rubber tubes pouring plasma into empty veins. Or they lie restlessly with bearded, mudsmeared heads rocking from side to side croaking for water. --- Beyond them lie the men who've come out of the operating room - you can tell them by the drains. There are tubes coming out of their wounds and tubes coming out of their nostrils and the orifices of their body. There are tubes feeding, yes feeding, saline and glucose solution into their veins. They can't take any other nourishment. And over all is the smell of antiseptics and ether, because in one corner of the shed, separated by hanging sheets is the operating room.

Here I saw the surgical teams operating AROUND THE CLOCK on three tables at once -- boldly, skilfully and most often, strangely enough,

successfully. I say strangely enough, taking into account the excellent equipment and the skill of the surgeons -- because I saw there what shell fragments can do to a man's body. One boy was caught by an air burst as he lay in his foxhole, and a splinter went diagonally through his abdomen his intestine had been torn and punctured in fifteen places. It took two surgeons five hours to complete the operation. On the table next to him Major Ralph Bowman of Fort Wayne Indiana was probing for a shell fragment in another boy's chest. Some of his ribs had splintered and been cut away, and through the gaping hole I could see his heart still beating and his torn lung oozing blood. The major found the fragment and picked it out. It was barely the size of a lump of sugar. --- On the third operating table was another severe abdominal wound. I was glad that the men had the rubber anesthetic masks strapped over their faces. I wanted to forget they were human beings who just that morning had been sound and well. After an hour and a half I wanted to see no more. But the three tables were used all through the night without pause. The surgeons say they have never gotten such severe wounds as they're getting now. They're mainly due to artillery fire -- and it's true that the Germans have been in the last three months doing things with artillery that they've never done before. Massed fire, intense direct fire, systematic use of air bursts are new. Not only do they wound severely but they often keep even the heroic medical parties from getting to the wounded. And they lie there with the winter cold sapping their strength.

Anyone who thinks we're moving too slowly, or that men of the First Army aren't trying hard enough should look into one of these hospitals. So should the people who already talk with a smile about the quote next war unquote.

Richard Cee Hottelet

15 December 1944

To: Joe Alex Morris
Colliers Magazine
New York

ORPHANS OF BATTLE
by Richard C. Hottelet,
CBS War Correspondent

With the First United States Army in Germany.....

Just below the battered, flat row of dirty red brick houses there was a sign, "Front 500 yards away. Dismount and fight." The two and a half ton truck had bounced up as far as it could go, and it sloshed through a puddle till it reached the dead cow and stopped on the side of the road. A sergeant swung himself out of the cab and trotted through the rain to a front door across the street. No one told the nineteen men in the open back of the truck what to do, so they stayed there - not saying a word, just looking.

Five minutes later the sergeant appeared in the doorway with the company First Sergeant, pointed over toward the truck, shrugged his shoulders and opened his mouth to shout. A jeep coming back from the front cut him off with a splatter of mud. It was a Graves Registration jeep with a trailer load of dead.

The First Sergeant sized the situation up immediately, and instead of just cursing, he bellowed the jeep to a stop. He glanced over to the men in the truck, looked at the awkward, muddy clumps of bodies in the trailer and shouted, "Get the overshoes off those men." Turning to me he muttered, "They don't need 'em any more." And then he bawled over to the truck, "All right, you guys, pile out and get in here."

A new contingent of infantry replacements had

arrived at the front.

The men obeyed meekly. Slowly and stiffly they climbed off the truck, rifle in one handt, their packs on their backs. It was getting dark, and their mudspattered overcoats and smeared, unshaven faces blended with their surroundings -- a world of mud and crumbled, dull red brick spilling into the streets of a German village, of greenblack pines in the forest behind them and a slate gray, dripping sky over all. Ahead of them, behind them and on both sides were the sound and flash of artillery - the resonant drumbeat of our own guns and the thicker crump of incoming enemy shells. Up ahead, now and again, they heard the busy chatter of machine guns and the popping of mortars.

Most of them had no overshoes, so they watched their feet crossing the potholed road. But when they heard something close by they looked up quickly to see what everyone else was doing. Then, silently, they kept coming and shuffled th eir way through the open doorway.

They crowded into a little, empty living room. A dusty blue velvet table cloth blacked out one gaping window, a grimy pink quilt the other. Hanging against the streaked and peeling brown wallpaper a diploma testified that Ernst Rueber had been thanked for his faithful fifty years of service as a stoker in the local factory. In the yellow half light of two kerosene lamps the men herded themselves around the walls and a young lieutenant came in to welcome them to the company.

As he talked they listened -- the x 19 year old

boy with the sandy hair who had been called up from a war plant, the 38 year old father of six children from North Carolina, the red headed tool and die maker from Detroit. Different as they were these replacements had a lot in common. All of them had been civilians (A FEW MONTHS AGO.) they had left the United States three weeks before. And, standing in this cold, ragged room on the western front, they were all surprised to find themselves there so quickly.

Their greatest bond was their uncertainty. They were unsure of themselves, of their training, of their ability to stand up under the strain of the front. They hardly knew where they were or what was going on. They had only just found out what unit they were going to fight with -- and they did not know a soul there.

A few steps from the door was the actual front line --- and they did not know what it was. They had seen snatches of war, real and imaginary, in the movies and in newsreels. They had heard the sounds of battle on the radio. They had read descriptions of the front;and well meaning veterans had supplied them with lurid tales. Each man's mind made the front a different thing. Mainly it was a kaleidoscopic image of foxholes and mud, fountains of filth sent up by shellbursts, incessant thunder of artillery and the sharp clatter of automatic weapons. Most of them thought of bodies in mangled heaps, of the stench of death and explosives. They thought of wounds and of arms and legs. They wondered whether they would withstand this great, secret trial. And none of them knew.

The welcome they got was a strange one, but as

honest and real as the German shells cracking among the houses. The lieutenant wasted no words. "You're going right into the line," he said, "because we need you there. We wish we could give you a chance to get used to the way things are up here —— but if you keep your heads you'll be all right."

A near ~~miss~~ hit sent the tablecloth flapping over the window. The lieutenant went on, "Don't let artillery fire disorganize or scare you. We're giving Jerry five times what he's giving us. And a lot of the stuff that falls out in front of you is our own. Jerry's outposts aren't far away here."

"Remember," he went on, "whatever you do, that ~~you~~ you're part of a team, and that the lives of other men depend on you. You'll be paired off in foxholes with experienced men, and you'll split guard about half and half. Don't fall asleep — you know what that means." The lieutenant wryly wrinkled a corner of his mouth. "I don't think you'll fall asleep." He paused, and then quickly, bridging a gap - "But I want to warn you against panic. Panic is when a man takes off for the rear —— and unless it's stopped it can spread to your squad and to your platoon. It's your duty to stop any man you see going back, even if he's your buddy."

"No matter how tough it gets out there the only way you'll go back until you're properly relieved is if you're wounded. And don't pull any of those self inflicted wounds in the hand or foot. You'll be tried for careless discharge of your weapon. It's got a safety on it, use it. ——— Another thing I want to tell you is to keep your weapon clean. You'll be depending on it. And take care of your body out her-

keep as dry and clean as you can. Massage your feet. — Any questions?"

The replacements just stood and looked. ~~Skxy~~ No one said a word, but they knew and I knew and the lieutenant knew that their minds were full of questions — the answers to which they would have to find themselves.

German shells kept coming in. There was no point in keeping men together a minute more than necessary. The lieutenant dismissed them to their platoons with a last word of warning. "Remember what you learned in basic training," he said. "And remember that, no matter how lonesome you feel out in your holes, there are a lot of men behind you and beside you. Keep contact with them and don't let them down. Good luck to you." And as the men pushed out of the room the lieutenant mumbled to himself - " nd God bless you."

When they were gone he turned to me, a bit wearily, and sighed -"Like orphans of the storm. I don't tell them we get a batch like them every few days, or that I know a lot of them will eventually be killed or wounded or sick. We play for keeps up here, and these boys don't even know the rules of the game."

A round came in close, we started for the cellar. "When we're in the line and fighting the way we are now we have to throw them in. And sometimes, when we've had a lot of casualties we can't even mix them with veterans. Green noncoms have to take green squads into the line — and their platoon leader may be a replacement lieutenant. Or we give a veteran squad leader five new men when it's too dark for him to see their faces, and too noisy to ~~xxxxx~~ hear their

names. About all he can do is show them their positions , point out what direction the enemy's in and hope they survive long enough to learn the tricks of the trade."

As a matter of fact, most of the replacements do survive, despite their lack of training, despite the bewilderment of their swift transition from home to battle. That they do is mainly ascribable to the good quality, mental and physical, of the average American soldier. He can now, which is important, always be sure of a warm welcome by the older men of his unit, whereas before the stream of replacements grew this large it was hard for new men to break into the closed circle of veterans.

But most depends on his first few days in the line. Out in the dark of night, in the crushing loneliness of an outpost ~~fmax~~ foxhole, he learns many things. First there are the noises - the hissings the whistles and whines overhead, the thumps and crumps, cracks and stutters around him. He sorts out the incoming and outgoing shells and bullets and feels comforted. He gets used to the flashes and tracers, and learns that each flare or rocket does not mean a counterattack. He finds after a while that all German artillery is not firing at him personally, that there is not a barrage everywhere on the front all the time, and that a sector can be amazingly still. It may be days before he sees a corpse or even a wounded man.

His foxhole outpost may be manned only at night, and during the day he may live in a cellar. It will probably be filthy and cramped and dim —— but much more important, also safe and dry, and

perhaps warm.

He gets to know how to heat food under the tarpaulin and earth covering his dugout against airbursts, and to arrange his blankets and shelter half to stay dry. He may get mail brought xx out to him by the First Sergeant. And if he experiences the weight of one of our artillery stonks or dive bomber attacks on an enemy threat out in front he warms to the realizgtion of how many men are beside and behind him to help him. He develops confidence in his squad leader, his platoon and company commanders and in himself. Both in defense and in attack he gets to feel at least the equal of the enemy, and on a much stronger team.

The replacement may unhappily come into a tense situation - a night counterattack with all its tumult and confusion, or a heavy enemy barrage. Not a few men have spent a terrible first night thatway, and been sustained by a smile or a few words from the man at their xixxt side; or have just - without knowing how - simply survived.

It normally takes about ten days for a replacement to adjust himself to battle conditions. In that time a small percentage completely loses self confidence and wanders back to a psychoneurotic ward, or with a self inflicted wound. Another small percentage gets too much self confidence and goes back as casualties. But the great bulk settles down like veterans to the life of the front.

A replacement is a military orphan in the fullest sense of the word. From the beginning of his military career - his 17 weeks of basic training - he belongs to no one. He does not know where

he is going and gets there only by being requisitioned like a blanket or a quart of plasma.

In the early years of the draft, when the American Army was expanding in all its branches, most of the men went into new units that were being organized from week to week. After their basic training they were generally assigned to a regiment and division, went on maneuvers with it, made friends and buddies, went overseas and into battle with it. Living together, working together, fighting together gave the men the spirit, the pride and comfidence in their organization that forms the soul of any military team. Leaders knew what they could expect of their men, and the men learned that they could trust their commissioned and noncommissioned officers. Ineffectives were weeded out.

Then the army reached the limit of its expansion, and as more and more divisions were committed in combat, suffered their losses and needed new men to bring them back up to strength, more emphasis was put on the Replacement System. Today most of the men drafted into military service go through the replacement training centers.

This does not matter so much in the United States. There is not very much difference between life in one garrison and life in another, and the solicitude of the USO and the Red Cross and public minded citizens applies equally to all. But after his training, and perhaps a month or so of waiting, the replacement is sent to a port of embarkation.

From there on in fate keeps hitting him in the face. Everything about him is transitory. He travels, for purposes of military

administration, in what is known as a "package" of 200 men and five officers. It is not a military organization - there is only rudimentary discipline, and certainly no training or drill. The men know that when they get to wherever they are going they will be split up and served out to various units.

From the time he gets aboard ship the individual soldier is in the hands of a ruthlessly efficient replacement system. Accustomed, as he usually is, to days or even weeks of ~~xxxxx~~ waiting as routine military procedure,he cannot realize how swiftly he is moving toward the front.

If the ship docks in the United Kingdom he is on a train, through England, and on his way to France in 48 hours or less. And once he lands in France he seldom stays in one place long enough to know exactly where he is.

He arrives at ~~xxx~~ a replacement depot at one of the big French ports. If he thinks he will be met by pretty French stage door canteen hostesses he awakens rudely. He is on a conveyor belt that never stops moving. He may spend the night there, sleeping on straw, getting his first taste of European winter mud. His main thought, of course, is of where he is going. Rumors, for which there is always plenty of time, never end. But he can never find out. The few people who do vaguely know are too busy getting him there to pick him out of a crowd of thousands and tell him. To them he is, quite literally,~~x~~ an inventory item to satisfy a requisition from an army group or an army for a certain number of riflemen.

He has come across to Europe without weapons, and with the clothes he can carry. At the first depot he is usually given a rifle, a reclaimed rifle that is very often not in the best condition. And he is given twelve shots to zero it in - adjust its corrections - on a thousand inch range. Which is not enough. He may get a bayonet, too, and a pair of rubber overshoes or galoshes. If there aren't enough on hand he is told he will get them at his next stopping point.

At the earliest possible moment, often within 24 hours, he is bundled aboard a truck with other members of his package and sent off. When he asks where to he gets the answer, "East". And he / bounces ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ all day and all night, if necessary, to get to his next destination.

The next stop is an intermediate replacement depot. But it is a stop - with a roof and a hot meal and perhaps a movie - only if no urgent requisition has arrived from the front. If it has the replacement and his package hardly slow down. ~~xxxx~~ They aren't there long enough even to ask where they are going.

The landscape jolts past him in swift panorama, usually through rain and mist and splattered mud that even his thick overcoat barely keeps out. If he is bound for the First Army front he gradually realizes that he has been travelling through Belgium. But his conception of the western front is hazy in the extreme. --- Since he left America he probably has not seen a newspaper or heard a news broadcast. He does not know which armies and which divisions are fighting where.

And he has never really stopped expecting that he

will be putx down somewhere to wait for a few days. So, when he passes a white sign on the right hand side of the road, whose black letters sternly say, "Entering Germany", he almost dismisses it as a joke. But soon he sees the tanks and halftracks, the guns and ambulances on the road that bespeak the real thing. And, if he passes through Aachen, and sees this ghost of a city with its warnings of falling buildings and uncleared mines, he does so with a sense of profound unreality.

He spends that night at a replacement battalion - his last stop before the front. He may write letters there by the light of a candle or kerosene lamp, but usually he is too tired to do much talking or even thinking. There is usually a mattress for him to sleep on, but he is tired enough to wrap his blankets around him and just lie down on the floor, thankful that it is dry.

The United States, with its cots and bunks and ~~xxxxx~~ sheets, its free theater tickets and dances and appreciation of him personally as a soldier in the service, is alread two or three weeks distant and a hazy memory. A hundred yards away a tired captain may be shouting into a phone, We can't send these riflemen to the 104th. The First Division has priority", and his destination, for the first time, may be fixed.

The next morning he will be given enough notice to wash himself and brush his clothes. He will be told what division he is assigned to. Trucks will come and get him, and the next evening some company First Sergeant will tell him briefly to "pile out and get in here". Separated even from his friends in his package, a stranger among strangers, he will drop off his truck and be at the front.

The men of the replacement system are good officers and intelligent human beings. They do not enjoy handling soldiers like sacks of wheat, and avoid it wherever possible. They realize how green the replacements are, how badly they need more training. And they try to season them by mixing the new men with the veterans who are on their way back tomthe front after recovering from wounds or injury. They try to toughen the men with physical training, to give orientation courses on the kind of fighting they will meet. But any systematic indoctrination is impossible for an organization that is designed and created to receive and deliver men at highest speed. Especially now, when demands for men outstrip the available supply, and force an inhumanly x swift turnover.

This war in Western Europe has turned into an ~~infantry~~ infantry war beyond anyone's power to foresee. Washington calculates the flow of manpower to the various theaters of war for months in advance. The divisions that landed in Normandie on June 6th were 2,500 men over strength, in anticipation of heavy casualties. And an automatic flow started immediately to take care of the next weeks' casualties.

But, for the most part, these losses did not appear. And when this low loss trend remained stable, the assessments of manpower requirements were, logically enough, revised. As the American armies raced through France and Belgium in the first three months with so many fewer casualties, it was not unreasonable to suppose that the surplus replacements on hand would see the war in Europe to its end.

Then came a pe iod without any really major operations, when, however, stiffening German resistance behind the Sieg-

fried Line kept drawing blood. Only over a period of weeks did it become clear that we would need more men — particularly riflemen.

By the beginning of October the rainsoaked, oozy ground had cancelled out armor as the decisive instrument. More reliance had to be placed on infantry, and infantry suffered more casualties. But alread riflemen were hard to get. In building up this huge, modern army, we had provided it with complicated, specialized, technical ancillary arms. Only about one man in five was an infantryman. And the infantry had about eighty percent of the casualties.

When the general offensive began early in November, when the powerful First U.S.Army bucking the main German defenses west of Cologne could only make less than half a mile a day, it was plain that the war, as far as military considerations could determine, would last through the winter. German reinforcements, an unprecedented use of massed German artillery, extensive German field fortifications brought us battle casualties. The incessant rain, the mud, the increasing cold brought us no small number of non-battle casualties - bronchitis, trench foot, frostbite. And, battle or nonbattle, casualties demanded replacements if efficiency was to be maintained.

Able bodied men waiting in replacement centers , classified for service in antiaircraft artillery, tank destroyers, fueld artillery; cooks, drivers, clerks - classifications in which casualties had been light were abruptly reclassified as infantry riflemen. The SOS and rear installations were combed out for men. In some cases the could be retrained; in most their dimly remembered basic training was all

they had to fall back on. More riflemen were ordered from America, and some were even flown across the ocean. 745, the riflemans' specification number became the most frequently used set of numbers in the army. New quotas went to draft boards, men came from war plants and from Army Student Training Programs to fill the need.

The individual replacement, being whisked up to the front did not know the big picture. And had he known it would have been little consolation. Nor would it be to the battalion and regimental commanders who receive these men.

Everyone knows, the men best of all, that they are spiritually and professionally insufficiently equipped. Basic training at home is good -- but no demonstration at home, no maneuver, no school of the soldier crammed into 17 weeks can turn a civilian into a combat rifleman. And the advanced training he gets, such as street fighting and experience with live ammunition is also good, but too brief. Above all, the recruit forgets easily. Lacking always is the sense of urgency and immediacy. It is difficult to get the average American boy to feel that he must do his utmost to remember everything - absolutely everything - he is taught or shown because in A FEW months his life will depend on it in the bitterest sense of the phrase. America is too far away.

Combast commanders recommend three to six weeks of precombat training for all troops arriving in Europe, preferably in a unit on a quiet sector of the front.

This is the military big time, and it is only fair to the men and to their leaders and to their organizations that the players know their parts. They need physical hardening and professional polishing. Not a week goes by that some new situation on this long andk bloody front does not produce a new tactical wrinkle. The place to learn it is here.

With its mud and ruined buildings, its palpability as wartime Europe this training ground will make added lessons stick. The men need more training with the auxiliary arms -- with tanks and tank destroyers and mechanized cavalry. They need more instruction in the new weapons - the bazooka and the 105 mm infantry cannon; training and experience with mines and booby traps, in night fighting, night movement, scouting and patrolling. And, most important of all, they need greater familiarity with the standard infantry weapons - with rifle and machine gun.

Until they get this help the orphans of battle will stay out in the storm.

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